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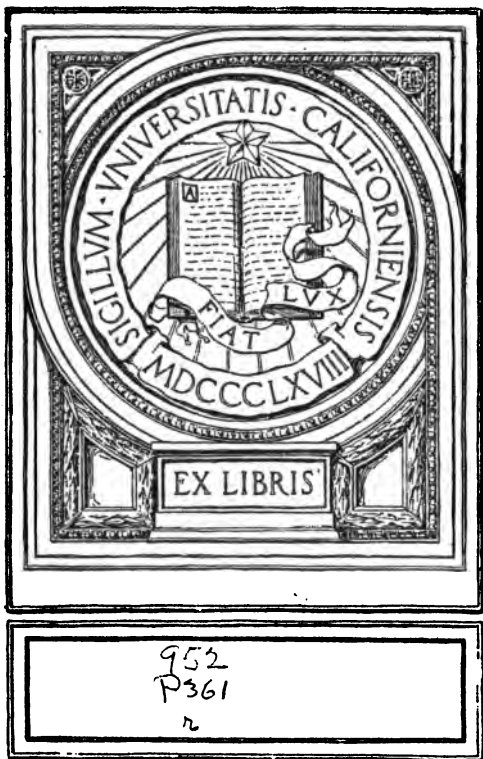
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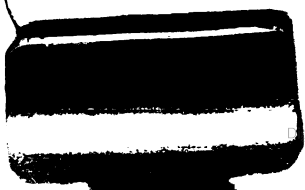
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**REVIEWS**  
**AND**  
**CRITICAL ESSAYS**



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TO THE  
ASSOCIATES



Sincerely yours,  
Charles H. Pearson

# REVIEWS AND CRITICAL ESSAYS

BY

**CHARLES H. PEARSON**

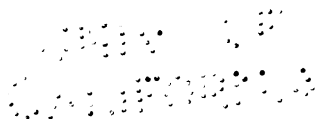
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WITH A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH AND PORTRAIT



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# CHARLES HENRY PEARSON

## A BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

BY

HERBERT A. STRONG

THE subject of the following brief memoir always seemed to me one of the most intellectually gifted men I have ever met. His memory was extraordinary, and his power of mastering masses of facts and drawing conclusions from them was equally remarkable. His experience of life, drawn from the observation of persons and events in Europe, was ever at hand to form his judgment. It was this happy faculty of recalling pictures of events in bygone times and in far-off countries which gave his conversation its peculiar charm, which all who conversed with him were ready to acknowledge.

During the long period of our intimacy in Victoria I always looked forward to the Sunday evenings which I usually spent at his house, as

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the greatest of intellectual treats. It was gratifying to notice the frank recognition which his wide learning received in the young colony of Victoria, and it was very pleasant to see the unfeigned admiration with which Dr. Pearson regarded the vigour and force which characterises our colonists. Especially for the young men with whom he was brought into contact he had the greatest sympathy. The frankness of the young Victorians, their kindliness and their affection, are traits which all their teachers must appreciate, but these traits were dwelt on with special frequency by Dr. Pearson.

In politics he was a Liberal; while I am a Conservative. But his school of Liberalism was such as would have only brought honour to his country. Being above all things jealous of the fair name of Britain, he always maintained that concessions should never be granted to Ireland when she claimed them with menaces, and he could not bear to think of Majuba Hill. His demeanour always retained rather more of academic gravity than is popular with colonists, who wear their hearts upon their sleeve, but those who came into contact with him were not slow to recognize that in him they saw a man of sterling stuff and of absolute fidelity. He was the

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most untiring worker, and it is matter for wonder how after days spent in a Government office or in teaching, he would spend his nights in writing history or literature.

The late Dr. Pearson was descended from ancestors who migrated in the 16th century from Lincolnshire into East Yorkshire. The eldest branch of this family to which Major Pierson, the defender of Jersey, belonged, died out in the direct male line towards the end of the last century.

Dr. Pearson's grandfather, John Pearson, born in 1758, having studied medicine at Leeds under the eminent surgeon W. Hay, was elected surgeon of the Lock Hospital, and while yet quite a young man, acquired one of the largest practices in London, and refused a proffered baronetcy.

He married a Miss Sarah Norman, cousin to the well-known Admiral Greig, whose descendant was minister of Finance in Russia. He had seventeen children, of whom seven survived him.

Dr. Pearson's father, the Rev. John Norman Pearson, M.A., was the eldest son. He became a scholar of Trinity, Cambridge, and took Holy Orders.

In 1815 he married Harriet Puller.

On his mother's side Dr. Pearson was de-

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scended from Sir W. Noyes, the adviser of Ship-Money, and from the famous Lord Clarendon.

The Rev. John Norman Pearson had six sons, five of whom survived him. The two eldest, John and Francis Pearson, distinguished themselves as members of the Bar, and rose to be Judges of the Supreme Court.

The Rev. John Norman Pearson came to Islington as Principal of the Church Missionary College, where Charles Henry Pearson, his fourth son, was born on Sept. 7th, 1830. Taught by his father until he was twelve years old, he was rather solitary, except during the holiday time of his brothers and sisters, who were at school. His father and mother, both influenced by the Calvinistic tone of the Evangelical school, brought up their children on the Puritanical system. He learned French sufficiently well to read Nicole and Arnaud and studied a great deal of Jansenist theology, of which his father had a great collection.

Some of the poems written by him at the age of eleven were very striking. Some other poetry published by him anonymously was highly praised by the press.

At the age of twelve he was sent to Rugby, and although youngest but one in a class of sixty he came out head of the whole class in examina-

tion. In 1846 he went to a private tutor, and from him he went in 1847 to King's College, London, of which Dr. Jelf was Principal. The Rev. F. D. Maurice was at this time Professor of Modern History, and Dr. Pearson felt his influence profoundly. From Dr. Brewer's teaching, however, he considered that he received the most stimulating part of his College training.

That the effect of the King's College training had a powerful influence upon his moral character, may be judged from his own words:

"As it was, the moral tone of the College was exceptionally good. It was considered bad form to be idle, and disgraceful to tell a lie. Copying at examinations was generally put down by a little quiet Lynch law; a committee of the elder students waiting upon the offender and tearing up his papers. Though a good deal of this spirit was attributable to home influences, I believe it was mostly due to the tradition of the place, which had been created by Principal and Professors. Dr. Jelf, the chief for more than twenty years, was a gentleman of the old school, who was incapable of supposing that anyone would lie to him.... It was an accepted maxim that no one could tell a lie to the Principal, because he always believed what was said.... after a few months at the



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College, every student, finding that he was treated as a gentleman, acted up to the gentleman's code of honour. Foul language and coarse wit were absolutely repressed by public opinion. I do not, of course, say that there were no offenders in these respects, but, speaking for a period of fourteen years, I know that the conversation of the Common room was absolutely pure; and that men suspected of lax talk or immoral practices were obliged to form little outside cliques by themselves. . . . Looking back on the list of old students, I see the names of such well known Liberals as Thorold Rogers, Charles Kingsley, and Frederick Harrison, Fitzjames and Leslie Stephen, Professor Fawcett, and Professor Clifford. The side of orthodoxy is almost as conspicuously represented by Dean Plumptre, Canon Liddon, and Dean Farrar, Bishop Barry, and Dr. Wace. We had morning chapel, and theological lectures, and the influence of two of our teachers, Maurice and Brewer, was distinctly more religious in tone—though religion was never obtruded—than any I have known anywhere else. Therefore, that the College and school should have turned out so many thinkers of the broadest type, is, I conceive, absolute evidence that the teaching was not sectarian, and presumptive evidence that it left its

recipients disposed to occupy themselves with the most important subjects of thought other than theological . . . . What we really owed to King's College was its influences upon character."

In June 1847 Charles Pearson gained the Plumtre Prize Poem at King's College by his poem entitled "The Rhine". The 10th of April, 1848, had been chosen by the Chartists for the presentation of a monster petition, backed by an overpowering display of force. All middle-class London armed itself with the special constable's bludgeon. A couple of companies were formed from the King's College Departments of Literature and Medicine, and Charles Pearson was elected Captain of the former. He caught a cold in the discharge of these duties, which ended in pleurisy, and sowed the seeds of mischief from which he never recovered.

He matriculated at Oriel College, Oxford, 14 June, 1849. The Provost was then Edward Hawkins, and the Dean, Charles Marriott. At the end of his first year in residence he gained a scholarship at Exeter College, and secured a classical First-class in the Michaelmas term of 1852; the late Earl of Carnarvon and Professor Chandler being in the same class. From 1849 to 1861 he studied German, Bohemian, Swedish, and Italian,

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and was fairly well versed in Schiller, Goethe, and Tegner, before he took his degree.

In the summer term several public-school men belonging to various Colleges formed a society for intellectual discussion.

The original seven members were:

George Brodrick, of Balliol, now Warden of Merton; A. G. Butler, of University, Fellow of Oriel; W. H. Fremantle, of Balliol, now Dean of Ripon; George T. Goschen, of Oriel, Financier and Statesman; H. N. Oxenham, of Balliol; C. Stewart Parker, of University, and Charles H. Pearson, Exeter.

The Hon. G. C. Brodrick says, "Pearson was eminent as a speaker at the 'Union' Society. One of his speeches on a motion applauding Mr. Gladstone for joining the Coalition Government in 1853, was the finest piece of rhetoric that I heard delivered in my time. There was another speech of his on the Dissolution of Monasteries, which I did not hear, but which I know was much admired."

Mr. Arthur G. Butler, Fellow of Oriel, first Headmaster of Haileybury, gives some interesting impressions of Dr. Pearson at this time, which he most kindly allows me to record. He says:

"I knew him first at Rugby, but only by sight.

There he had the reputation of cleverness, strength, and a somewhat lonely habit of taking his own line, and going his own way. Consequently, no one was much surprised when he left Rugby and went to King's College, where his student ways would find fewer interruptions than in a great boarding-school. And his time was well spent there. When we met again at Oxford he astonished all his old Rugby contemporaries by his maturity of thought and knowledge; and the seemingly exhaustive theories of life, which he had ready at his fingers' ends.

"To his influence we all, I think, owed a great deal. His tone was lofty: in politics he did not belong to any party, nor did he interest himself much in party politics. What he really cared for was social questions, and here his London experience had given him a knowledge of many of those problems affecting Capital and Labour, which were then seething in the minds only of the more advanced thinkers, whereas now they are the commonplaces of Debating Societies throughout the Kingdom. At the Union, he spoke seldom, but always with the greatest effect. There was an earnestness and loftiness about his tone and voice, as well as a point and brilliancy about his style, which distinguished him even at a time when

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there were many good speakers. One of these I specially remember, in which he warned the Tories of the changes imminent in the Constitution, and the breaking up of the old state of society.

“‘In the shade of archiepiscopal Palaces, there were springing up,’ he said, ‘new principles and new parties, which would convulse and overturn the present order of things: which might be a blessing, if we would understand and come to terms with them: but otherwise would cause a new revolution in England, to which the old historical Revolution would be mere child’s play in comparison.’

“There was something of solemnity, without a shade of pedantry, in his voice and manner, as he said this, which, for the time, bore down all opposition, and wakened thoughts in men’s minds, anticipating many of the movements of the present day, which never before had entered there.

“And this made him a man of great influence among his contemporaries, and he was looked to as a person from whom much might be expected.

“So much for his public appearances. In private, in the circle of friends, among whom might be mentioned Professor Conington, Henry Smith, Goschen, Grant Duff, and others not unknown subsequently for their public services, he was

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always a prominent figure. Thoroughly genial, and understanding the varied duties of friendship, he stands out in memory as one always employed on great questions, and bringing the conversation back to them if it wandered. And he had a view on all of these, singularly complete and rounded off, and supported by telling facts, which critics and opponents found difficult to answer. He was a man, who, even in lighter moments, said things which left their mark, and made his hearers think."

Finally, resolving to enter the medical profession, he stayed in Oxford two years, coaching pupils, and studying anatomy and physiology with Sir Henry Acland's assistance, and chemistry under Neville Story.

In 1854 Dr. Pearson was elected a Fellow of Oriel College, which then enjoyed the prestige of being a chief centre of intellectual ability in the University. In the long vacation he went with a reading party to the heart of Connemara and while at Maam, at the head of Lough Corrib, took a severe attack of pleurisy which brought him to death's door.

Dr. Pearson considered that he owed his life at this time to the careful nursing of Mr. Arthur Butler, and to the kind care and skill of Dr. Plunket, and Dr. Marsh of Dublin, and although

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he recovered to a certain extent, he was obliged to give up the medical profession, his medical advisers assuring him that he would never have the strength to withstand the exposure and strain of a physician's life.

Mr. Arthur Butler says:

"We had settled to go together—being both Fellows of Oriel—to the West of Ireland, to read, see the people, and enjoy ourselves. I was to take a small reading party, and we were to meet at Galway. From this place, rather late in the evening, we started in a car to drive to Maam, at the head of Lough Corrib; and as we drove, a fine Irish rain began to fall, which we seemed to breathe into us, in the pervading damp of the atmosphere.

"Suddenly I remember, he turned to me, and said—'I have got pleurisy,' and proceeded to describe the symptoms to me with a minuteness and interest which I shall never forget. Still we had to go on through the rain and darkness, and it was late when we arrived at our destination, a small inn at the head of the lake, which was to be the scene of his illness and my great anxiety, and was the very last place where anyone would wish to face a serious malady.

"We went to bed, and the next morning, about

4 A.M., he woke me, and begged for certain things like mustard, hot water, etc., and above all that a doctor should be sent for. We were in a house with small provision for sickness, but everything was done which could be done; and a messenger—‘a swift woman,’ was at once despatched to summon the doctor, who lived eight miles away, and was no good when he came. It was a long and hard struggle for life, aggravated by Pearson’s knowledge of all his symptoms and by the want of all the usual remedies for such an illness. Moreover, our host was bankrupt, and we had an execution and sale in the house during our stay here, which lessened the comforts of the place, though the unruffled good-temper and goodwill of the people in the inn were proof even against this trial. ‘*Cantabit vacuus*’—they had little to lose.

“At last, however, we made a push on to the Killeries, being in a state of despair, and there found a family doctor of some members of the Plunket family, whose skill and kindness patched him up sufficiently to enable us to get him back, first to Galway by car in a journey of some thirty miles, in which only the excellence of Irish roads prevented fatal consequences—and then to Dublin, where I resigned my charge to his brother, who came from London to meet him.



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"This illness must, I fear, have left a mark upon him, all through his life, and, possibly, been in part the cause of his leaving England for Australia. Of his demeanour during the illness I can only say that it was all that could be expected from a good and Christian man struggling with a most depressing malady under very unfavourable circumstances. His patience was indomitable, and his consideration for others quite exceptional: but I thought at the time that his recovery was retarded by his disposition to take gloomy views of his condition, and for some time to abandon needlessly every hope of recovery.

"The circumstances, however, were very trying: they were of a kind to excuse any amount of depression and despondency."

I have given Mr. Butler's account of this illness, because the same characteristics were remarkable also in the one that was destined to be fatal, forty years later; with this exception, however—there was no despondency, only a certain calm cheerfulness. He was willing to live, and yet more willing to die, with a visible longing for that more perfect knowledge that can be attained only by death.

Mr. Arthur G. Butler goes on to say: "I do not write for publication, but merely to record and illustrate for private use, the impression that

he made upon me of a very fine mind and character, full of sympathy for all sufferers from public wrong and injustice, and indignation against their oppressors. It was this which led him to risk his life during the Polish insurrection, by going there as a kind of war correspondent for, I think, the *Daily News*. It was not, I should say, a work for which he was specially suited, being a man rather suited for writing and speaking, than for action and adventure: but his warm sympathies and absolutely fearless temper drew him there, and he has doubtless left behind him interesting memorials of his experience. It was unquestionably the same feeling and temper which led him to play the part he played subsequently in the politics of Australia. And it was thoroughly in accordance with all his early utterances in Oxford days."

Sir Henry and Mrs. Acland, Mr. Hutton and Mr. Townsend of the *Spectator*, Mr. Bagehot, Mr. Fitzjames Stephen, Sir Mount Stuart Grant Duff, Mr. Goschen, Mr. George Miller, and Mr. Brodrick were amongst those with whom he mixed most freely at this time, besides those already mentioned as his friends and contemporaries at Oxford.

In 1855 he was appointed lecturer in English Language and Literature at King's College, London, and within a term also became Professor of Modern

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History in place of Mr. G. W. Dasent who had resigned. Dr. Wace, Professor Clifford, Mons. Naville, and Mr. Izon (now in the Indian Civil Service) were among his pupils. He now contributed articles to the *Saturday Review*, and was thanked by Victor Hugo for reviewing *Les Misérables*. At this time Charles Pearson was thrown into the society of Dr. George Babington, Lord Macaulay, and Sir James Stephen, who was an old college friend of his father. He obtained in 1857 the prize for a "Poem on a Sacred Subject," awarded once in three years, by his poem "The Death of Jacob." In 1858 he travelled in Russia, and on his return published an interesting account of his travels in a book entitled, *Russia by a Recent Traveller*.\* For several years he travelled much on the Continent, applying himself when abroad to the study of languages and of the people. Believing that his ideas on Biblical inspiration were not in harmony with those held by the authorities at King's College, he offered his resignation, as he had no intention of concealing his views; but Dr. Jelf declined to accept it. He was more influenced

\* (Bell and Daldy, 1859). The chapter on Russian Literature is probably even now one of the most interesting and able contributions to the subject.

at this time by Goethe's views of culture than by any desire to make a fortune or a name. He frequently contributed to the *Spectator* both poetry and prose, and in 1861 he began to write his *History of England during the Early and Middle Ages*. In 1862 he undertook the editorship of the short-lived *National Review* just resigned by Mr. Hutton. His connection with this paper lasted just a year.

In the summer of 1863 Dr. Pearson set out for Cracow, and from thence travelled to Warsaw; he mixed with Polish society, and heard much about the insurrection against Russia, which for the moment was enjoying a temporary success. He left Poland sympathizing deeply with the heroic efforts of the people, and charmed by the manners and tone of the upper class. The *Spectator* published his account of the country and its struggles. It was translated into French, reviewed with high praise, and largely quoted. In 1864 Dr. Pearson went to Australia on account of ill-health, Dr. Jelf insisting on his retaining the Professorship for a year, in case he should wish to take it up again. In a year he returned to England, by way of India, almost completely restored to health; and took a house in Farnham Royal, where, in almost unbroken solitude,

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he revised the first volume of his *History of England, during the Early and Middle Ages*, and prepared a second.\* Miss Clough invited Dr. Pearson to give lectures to large classes of women in Manchester and Liverpool, and as he was strongly in favour of the higher education of women, he accepted. He found the classes largely attended, and the women worked admirably, proving in his opinion that they were fit for the same intellectual training as men. After concluding these lectures he started for America and landed in New York in 1868. At Boston he met Olmsted and many other distinguished literary men, including Ticknor, Longfellow, Agassiz, Lowell, Wendell Holmes, Charles Norton and his wife, Wendell Philips, Bowen, Fields, and Shattuck. From the far west he worked his way to Washington, and there enjoyed the society, among others, of Mr. Seward, President Johnson, General

\* The value of this second volume was acknowledged by all, even by Freeman, his assailant of the first, who, as is known, never lost an opportunity of bitterly criticising the works of a contemporary, when these encroached on his ground. A year or two before his death Dr. Pearson said that subsequent reading and researches convinced him that he was right in his conclusions. "On main points, my belief has never been shaken, and I am convinced that the extravagant Saxonism of the present school will be swept away by coming historians as ruthlessly as Thierry's first romantic version of that particular theory has already been."

Banks, and Judge Chase. In the struggle between the North and the South he sympathised with the Northerners, and did all in his power to help their cause. On his return to England he predicted that in some twenty-five years America would cease to be a field for immigrants.

During the next six months Dr. Pearson devoted himself to what he considered his best piece of historical work, the *Maps of England in the First Thirteen Centuries*. He paid dearly for his devotion, for he owed the impairment of his eyesight to the hours spent over the small type of badly printed maps. His Atlas was at once deemed a masterpiece. The first edition was sold off in three months, and the second very soon paid its expenses. In 1868 Dr. Pearson was offered a prelectorship of Ancient History at Oxford, but declined it on the ground that he had not made Ancient History a special study.

In 1869 Dr. Pearson went to Sweden, and on his return to England accepted a lectureship of Modern History at Trinity College, Cambridge. As his eyesight was suffering from over-work, he resolved to return to Australia and to settle in the Bush. He arrived in South Australia in December 1871.

On December 6th 1872, he married Edith Lucille

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Butler, eldest surviving daughter of Philip Butler of Tickford Abbey, Bucks, and of Mathilda Roe daughter of Captain Roe, R.N., and the niece of General Lyons brother of Admiral Lord Lyons. As the climate of South Australia did not suit his wife's health, Dr. Pearson gave up sheep-farming, and in 1873 accepted a lectureship on History at the University of Melbourne.

Always anxious to promote the higher education of women he undertook, later in the year, the Headmastership of the Presbyterian Ladies' College. Dr. Harper says: "At once the school took the first place, and every prejudice seemed to give way. Even ladies whose school days were past, came to attend lectures which Dr. Pearson instituted, and the result has been that the whole education of women has been revolutionized and the old type of girls' school has become extinct as the dodo. In large part this was the work of Dr. Pearson, and he brought to it a skill in organization and a scholarship such as have rarely been employed in a similar sphere. The tone he established in the school was extraordinarily high, and it has so remained, long after his two years and a half of official connection with it came to an end."

In June 1877 Dr. Pearson was commissioned

by Government to draw up a report on the best and most economical mode of constituting free education in Victoria. The preparation of this report involved severe labour and much travelling.

The report was exhaustive, has been extensively quoted from, and is held as a book of reference in several Universities.

Dr. Pearson was not a member of the Legislative Assembly when the deadlock occurred between the two Houses. He did not approve of the action of the Liberal Government in dismissing the judges and public officials on account of the Upper House refusing to pass the Supply Bill, but as he was not a member of the House he had no power in the matter. The Deadlock still continuing between the two Houses and all business being obstructed in consequence, Mr. (now Sir Graham) Berry and Dr. Pearson went to England on a diplomatic mission to request the Imperial Government to withdraw certain of their powers from the Upper House, pointing out that all necessary legislation and business for the country was at a standstill.

The English Government declined to interfere for the time being, but intimated that should such an event occur again the Imperial Government would reconsider the point. In the mean-



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time the Victorian Council passed the Supply Bill, and the immediate difficulty was at an end.

In 1878 Dr. Pearson entered the Legislative Assembly as member for Castlemaine (his fellow-member being Mr. Patterson). His advocacy of a progressive land-tax and of a tax on the unearned increment, stirred up great bitterness against him on the part of the large land-owners. He wrote articles upon the subject in the *Age*, the Liberal paper, which were the subject of worse than keen counter-criticism in the Conservative Press.

Owing to Dr. Pearson's great services and sacrifices for the Liberal party, he was made Minister without portfolio in the third Berry Ministry, from August 1880 to July 1881.

The post of Agent-General, which had been vacant for a year, and which had been promised for that time to Dr. Pearson, was offered to him on the eve of the compulsory resignation of the Government; but he declined it, thinking that, under the circumstances, he could not accept it with honour to himself and the Ministry. Mr. Deakin, Mr. Patterson and Mr. Berry pledged themselves to offer him this appointment, should the opportunity again occur.

In 1883 he was elected member for the East Bourke Boroughs, and held the seat until the

general election of 1892, when he did not contest it. On the formation of the Gillies and Deakin administration he became Minister of Education, and held the office till November 1890. During this time he wrote the preface to a new edition of 'Juvenal,' with notes, in conjunction with myself.

One of the earliest innovations introduced by the new Minister was the establishment of two hundred State school-scholarships, to be competed for by pupils of the State schools. The holders were to have allowances of from ten to forty pounds annually, nearly sufficient to defray their instruction at Grammar Schools. Generally this instruction was to last for three years, being designed to give the most deserving pupils of the State primary schools the benefits of a higher education. Four previously existing scholarships (termed "exhibitions") were then modified and arranged so as to carry the best of the holders of these scholarships through a graduate's course at the University of Melbourne.

By this school Dr. Pearson sought to establish a link between the primary schools and the University, and many young men, now rising to positions of honour and usefulness have to thank him for the helping hand extended to them by his wise and liberal measures.

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In New South Wales something of the kind was attempted by means of State-aided middle-class schools, but the cost of such institutions was great, while in no case did they offer the advantages or the elasticity of the scholarship system. It was considered, therefore, that the Victorian system was in itself more beneficial, and served the double purpose of providing rewards for the best State school pupils and at the same time of aiding secondary teaching. When Dr. Pearson became Minister of Education, two or three difficulties had to be faced.

At a period of exceptional prosperity it was found difficult to secure or to retain young men for the teacher's office. They would serve for two or three years and then quit the service for the greater attractions offered outside. This difficulty could be met by only one course—that of raising the pay of such teachers:—and the Minister did not hesitate to take this step in view of the educational interests at stake. But a deficiency of male teachers was not the only difficulty to be faced by the Department. Qualified female teachers in abundance could be found for towns and for the centres of population; but few of them would go to the small bush schools which formed the majority of the Victorian schools, little

establishments with twenty or thirty pupils each, in which only a single teacher could be employed. It was the policy and desire of the Education Department to place women rather than men over these schools, as being cheaper and more suitable teachers. Dr. Pearson provided a yearly allowance of fifteen pounds for such teachers; enough to induce many women to undertake these schools, though not enough to make a female teacher's salary and allowance the equivalent of that enjoyed by a male teacher. In this way the Minister was able at a less cost to replace male teachers by the gentler and safer influences of female instructors. It was the wish of this Minister that the State school-course should be as liberal as was consistent with the wants of the people, and the conditions of the Colony. Hence he did not hesitate to offer facilities to teachers to improve their qualifications in various ways. Thus, at one time a lady expert from England was commissioned to give lectures on the teaching of needlework; and these lectures were open gratuitously to all female State school teachers. The attention thereby given to this subject is believed to have produced lasting benefits; and has had for its result an actual change in the teacher's programme of instruction in needlework.

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The Kindergarten system, so capable of interesting little children, of educating their fingers, and of stimulating their constructive powers, found an active sympathiser in him. Seeing the value of its practice, though also recognising that much outlay on its objects was not justifiable, he found an expert, and commissioned her to give courses of lectures to the Victorian teachers. These lectures were given to hundreds of teachers, who rapidly learnt the system, and who more or less effectively carried it out in many parts of the Colony. In another direction, the Minister was the means of introducing, for the benefit of the most advanced girls in State schools, a course of lessons in simple cookery. These lessons were much prized, and it is probable that, had he remained in office, Dr. Pearson would have conferred many other advantages upon the Victorian system of public instruction.

He was a firm supporter of secular education as established in the Colony, thinking it the only means of securing perfect fairness towards all religious denominations, as attendance at the State schools was compulsory, and the number of sects was large.

He gave the clergy of the different denominations, however, the right to teach religion in the schools for one hour every day.

During Dr. Pearson's Ministry the limit of compulsory attendance at school was changed from fifteen to thirteen years of age, and the statutory amount of attendances from forty to thirty days a quarter.

Dr. Pearson's sympathy with practical education is further seen in the establishment of technical schools, of which he really became the founder.

At the time of his resignation of office he was preparing a scheme for the abolition of payment by results. The system has been abandoned in great measure in England, its original home; few other countries have been persuaded to adopt it, and now Victoria and Mauritius are the only countries where it remains in operation. Dr. Pearson fathered the Bill for giving the Degrees of the University of Melbourne to Women, carried it through the House, and succeeded in getting it passed. He was also greatly instrumental in getting Mr. Sheil's Divorce Bill carried; a Bill which places women on much the same legal footing as men as regards Divorce.

Dr. Pearson was for some time a member of the Council of Melbourne University, a trustee of the Public Library, also a member of the Council of the Ballarat School of Mines, and of that of the Melbourne Working Men's College, which is a technical school with a roll of more than 2,000 students,

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founded by the late Mr. Ormond. When this college was in the course of being established, Dr. Pearson acted as honorary secretary, and Mr. Ormond acknowledged publicly that it owes its success very largely to his efforts. He was one of the few Englishmen honoured by the French Government by the University title of "Officier d'Instruction publique."

Dr. Pearson always took a deep interest in the Volunteer Corps, and many of the commanding officers have expressed their thanks to him for the reforms which he brought about in the Drill schools during the time that he was Minister of Education.

In 1892 the Agent-Generalship became vacant, and it was generally thought that the post would be offered to Dr. Pearson, as a Liberal Government was in power.\* An attack of influenza, followed by pneumonia, caused his medical adviser to order him away on a voyage. He accordingly returned to England with his family, and the change did his health much good for a time.

There is a passage in the Biographical Sketch of Professor Henry Smith written by Dr. Pearson, in which the author seems to have described the very

\* Mr. Munro, then Premier, and also a Director of the Federal Bank of Australasia which collapsed under painful circumstances, nominated himself with the full consent of his cabinet.

character and qualities which those who knew him best would be most likely to attribute to Pearson himself. "What impressed me was not so much his marvellous versatility or his thorough mastery of everything he touched, or his conversational brilliancy, though none of all these can be separated from my recollection of him—as his singularly clear judgment, combining insight into the essential truth of whatever he examined with balance in the summing up of it. Never did genius more completely take the form of sublimated common sense; and this effect was undoubtedly enhanced by his unassuming manner." And again: "He who gave the perfect intellect gave also the fine temperament, the tenderness that shrank from disobliging, the modesty that esteemed no duty undignified, the absolute disregard of self." I have known Dr. Pearson frequently in the midst of arduous public duties spend long hours in aiding his friends or old pupils in literary work. He would spare no pains in giving the best fruits of his ripe literary judgment to the merest tiro, if only he felt that earnestness and seriousness of purpose were in the questioner. When in office he treated his subordinates with consummate courtesy; to mere errors of judgment he was very lenient, but to deviations from the path



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of duty he was inexorable. His whole nature was incapable of harbouring suspicion against any individual; and this absolute guilelessness on his part not unfrequently led him to continue confidence in characters after their actions seemed to others to merit distrust. Dr. Pearson's favourite motto was, "To thine own self be true," and holding a peculiarly high ideal of character as his standard for private, as well as for public life, he was as true and devoted a husband and father, as he was fearless and upright in public life. His courtesy to ladies was very marked, and more was intended to be conveyed by it than the ordinary deference paid by a gentleman to one of the weaker sex: for Dr. Pearson was a profound believer in the capacity of women's intellect, and in the accuracy of their judgment. Indeed, as I well remember, his teaching at the Presbyterian Ladies' College raised the whole standard of women's education throughout the colony, and rendered it henceforward impossible to doubt either the capacity of women for receiving the highest education, or the efficacy of the new Headmaster's methods of imparting such education. Even now, after a lapse of many years, a course of lectures on history given by Dr. Pearson to the Ladies' Association of Liverpool, is remembered

for its brilliancy. But he was much more than the brilliant lecturer. The rapidity with which he linked thought to thought, and effect to cause, in no way blunted his sympathy for the dullards who came under his care. Indeed, he was slow to admit that any given student was a real dullard. He believed that method was everything in teaching; and that as a rule it would be found that the teacher who was troubled with most dullards was least troubled with method. He would take infinite pains to find out the points which possessed interest for his different students, and was always ready with timely counsel for all the teachers under him.

Owing to pecuniary losses, Dr. Pearson accepted in 1893 what he believed to be the post of permanent Secretary to the Agent-Generalship's office—a post alike unworthy of his status and his learning.

Sir Andrew Clarke, the then acting Agent-General gave it as his opinion, that never had so much work been accomplished in a corresponding time, or done more efficiently, than during the year of Dr. Pearson's term of office.

In February 1894 he caught a chill, which settled on his lungs. He persisted, however, in attending the office till the very last, in spite of the entreaties of his wife and daughters, who were

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with him to the end. A few days before his death he revised his book: *National Life and Character, a Forecast* for a second edition. Always gentle, and unselfish, he bore his sufferings with heroic fortitude, and expressed his firm belief in the justice and love of God.

He died on May 29th, 1894.

To those who did not know the man, this sketch may seem to be too much of a panegyric. Those, however, who knew him well, will recall many noble traits of character and heart that have not been touched upon, and the attempt here made to give a picture of him must seem feeble and ineffective.

But if I have conveyed a true, although faint idea of his character as a man, and have given some notion of his untiring zeal as a worker, for he was indeed "a master worker", I hope I may be pardoned for not expecting to do more in this brief sketch.

The Premier of Victoria, in the Legislative Assembly, observed that no more honourable, upright, sincere, energetic, and painstaking man ever sat in the Victorian Legislative Assembly, either as a private member or as a Minister of the Crown. Dr. Pearson's great learning, grasp of constitutional history and precedent, together with

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his ability to bring the historical past prominently and forcibly before the House, was a strong educational factor in raising the standard of the debates. His loss, in these circumstances, was irreparable.

The Hon. J. G. Duffy in the Legislative Assembly of Victoria, said of his friend Dr. Pearson, that "he had never heard him say an unkind word of any human being. He was a cultivated gentleman, an eloquent speaker, a graphic writer, a scholar, a historian, and a gentleman who raised the tone of debate in the House, so that the House and the country benefited. . . ."

The Leader of the Opposition "could call to mind Dr. Pearson's earnest Liberalism, when as headmaster of a College here, and feeling warmly the injury which large landed estates inflicted on a progressive community, he boldly took to the platform, and spoke the truth that was in him, and for doing so, paid a penalty of suffering.... Not only was he a distinguished scholar and a courageous statesman, but as a friend his sympathy was bound by hooks of steel."

"Since Dr. Pearson threw in his lot with the country which in the later period of his career he had chosen for his home, he exercised a powerful, though often unobtrusive influence on

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public affairs. Both as a journalist, and a politician, in the press, and in Parliament, he displayed qualities of mind, and character, which commanded the respect and admiration of all who were qualified to appreciate intellect and integrity. Before he came to Australia, Dr. Pearson had achieved reputation as a man of letters; but it was in the Colonial arena that he established his claims to practical statesmanship.

“Like Robert Lowe he could point to a brilliant record of university distinction, and he had the same instinctive scorn for the vulgar ideals which bound the horizon of the plutocrat, and the money-grubber. He was unswerving in his adhesion to his conscientious convictions. . . .

“His breadth of view, and keen and cultured intelligence had an educative influence on those with whom he was associated in politics, while through the brilliancy of his writings in the press, he contributed largely to the enlightenment of the public mind. . . . The praise bestowed upon him as a conscientious and able administrator, a thoroughly reliable politician, an admirable journalist, and a philosophic writer of great grasp of thought and depth of insight, is no excess of eulogy.

“His literary eminence was more fully appreciated among his compeers in England, where his latest

work on *National Life and Character, a Forecast*, written, as he has stated, 'under sentence of death', was recognised as a remarkable contribution to modern thought. Here he will be remembered as conferring lustre on political life, and as increasing the high reputation which the best Australian journals have attained."\*

It remains to say a word upon his book on *National Life and Character, a Forecast*.

This book was published in the beginning of 1893 and excited extraordinary interest, and was much discussed. The *Westminster Gazette* says: "In its capacity for stimulating thought, its long range, and forecast of speculation, there has been nothing like it since the Classics of the Middle Century—the greater volumes of Mill, Herbert Spencer, and Bagehot—or since John Morley left speculation for history and politics."

Referring to his style a reviewer says:

"The elevated style rises at times into measured and stately eloquence, like that of Gibbon, or of the speeches of Mansfield, arresting the reader's mind, and quickening his reflection."

The *Athenæum* speaks of it as "serious, pure, and pleasing, even eloquent, but never high-flown, or rhetorical."

\* Article in the Melbourne Press,

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Had Dr. Pearson lived he would have seen some points in his forecast verified. For the Chinese are already being forced to open up their commerce with Europe. And it is by their commerce as an Industrial race that he predicted their eventual strength, coupled with their enormous numbers as a nation.\* We have already seen one of the yellow races, the Japanese, rise in one generation to the rank of a second-class military power.†

The fact that the Chinese fell an easy prey to the Japanese, has in some quarters been held to imply that his forecast was mistaken. But in the first place it must be remembered that it is the industrial competition of the Chinese that he most feared, combined with the gradual but sure expansion of the "Yellow Belt", which will, he assumes, in fifty or a hundred years hence, confine the Aryan race to the Temperate Zones. Authorities like Sir Alfred Lyall and the American missionary Mr. Smith, have borne ample testimony to the fact that the industrial capacity of the Chinese is as unimpaired as ever.\*\* Dr. Pearson had seen in California and in Australia the calm and dogged

\* *National Life and Character, a Forecast*, p. 129.

† *National Life and Character, a Forecast*, p. 84.

\*\* I call particular attention to the testimony of my friend and old pupil Dr. Morrison on this point;—see *An Australian in China*, p. 223.

perseverance of the Chinese, their tolerance of climatic extremes, and their bodily vigour on a scanty and often repellent diet. He knew that the Chinese could live and flourish in vast tracts of Australia and other tropical countries, which can never hold a population of Europeans. And he had the express testimony of European officers like Gordon that when well led the Chinese made splendid fighting men. Further, testimony is unanimous that the population of China is fabulously great, that it is poor, and that it is probably increasing. On our side, we are called upon to remember that our population is more and more displaying a tendency to settle in large towns where the physique of the nation deteriorates, so that in process of time it may be assumed that our qualities as a fighting race will not increase with our numbers. Surely, in the face of these facts, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that a nation like the Chinese may one day develop into a fighting race not inferior to that other Oriental race, who has just wakened into life and ambition before the eyes of a wondering world, and driven Western nations to take counsel whether Japanese civilisation is not destined to alter the plans of Western diplomacy.

In this, his monumental book, we read Dr. Pearson's last noble, but mournful words ;



"It is now more than probable that our science, our civilisation, our great and real advance in the practice of government are only bringing us nearer to the day when the lower races will predominate in the world, when the higher races will lose their noblest elements, when we shall ask nothing from the day but to live, nor from the future but that we may not deteriorate. Even so, there will still remain to us ourselves.

"Simply to do our work in life, and to abide the issue, if we stand erect before the eternal calm as cheerfully as our fathers faced the eternal unrest, may be nobler training for our souls than the faith in progress."

HERBERT A. STRONG

University College.

Liverpool, Dec. 1895.

Sources of Information: *Mennel's Dict. of Australian Biog.*; *Professor Pearson's Ministerial Career*, by George Brodribb, M.A.; *The Times*; *Westminster Gazette*; *The Sidney Mail*; Private information. *Reviews and Critical Essays*, published by kind permission of *The Age*, Melbourne. *Nineteenth Century*, No. 223, *Permanent Dominion in Asia*, by Sir Alfred Lyall, K.C.B., K.C.I.E. Chapter 17, *Chinese Characteristics*, by Arthur H. Smith. (Kegan Paul.) Page 344, *National Life and Character, a Forecast*, by Charles H. Pearson, LL.D. Macmillan.

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# REVIEWS AND CRITICAL ESSAYS

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## I.—PERSONAL MEMOIRS

DR. JOHNSON is recorded to have said that if he thought Boswell were writing his life he would take Boswell's. Neither the threat nor the implied wish prevented Boswell from writing down day by day what his friend said; and in this instance the world is certainly richer by an imperishable work, and Johnson himself owes his chance of immortality to his biographer. Nevertheless, the question cannot be said to have been settled by Boswell's literary success. Very rarely are an autobiography or a diary or letters of any special interest published, but a cry is raised that confidence has been violated, or, if the revelations be purely personal, that the writer has destroyed his own reputation. To take a very recent case, it has generally been felt that Carlyle's *Memoirs* were fatal to all hero worship of that particular thinker, and the public resented rather bitterly that its idol had been dashed down from its pedestal. Why, it was asked, should not the

grave be allowed to close over the recollection that Carlyle thought and spoke depreciatingly of almost all his contemporaries, and that his egotism wearied out the patience of a singularly devoted wife? On the other hand, Mr. Froude, writing, it may be presumed, as a historian, and discarding all feelings of private regard, claims that it is essentially right that a man whom the world wishes to remember should be known in his weaknesses as well as in his strength. Neither is it quite easy to controvert this theory. Probably many of us are supremely grateful to time for obliterating all petty gossip about Shakespeare's life, so that the one great artist of the English race is known to us only by his pure and spiritual works. If it were possible to conceive that Shakespeare ever wrote such nauseous letters to his wife as have lately been proved against Bulwer Lytton, or conducted himself as brutally in his home, no sane man can desire that the record should be revived. On the other hand, the publication of Lady Bulwer's letters is certainly justified by the fact that her son had deliberately given the world a partial and false estimate of his mother's character. To most of us Bulwer Lytton probably seems a very much overrated man, whose biography, for all its real value, might easily have been

packed into a single duodecimo volume. From the moment, however, that his reasons for a separation come to be discussed, it is certainly right that the wife's case should be heard as well as the husband's.

It is more than probable that as autobiographies get to be more common, they will tell us less of the real characters of the writers. Rousseau's *Confessions* have always been regarded as unique in their way for the shameless avowal of blackguard actions and motives, and for the frank unveiling of a morbidly jealous mind. A nineteenth-century Rousseau would certainly have the intelligence to understand that his predecessor had not profited with posterity by saying so much evil of himself and his enemies. In his case the autobiography is more or less a setting out of facts as the writer wishes the world to judge of them, and it depends on the skill with which this is done whether a penetrative criticism can separate what is true from what is false. In Bulwer Lytton's autobiography there is one highly coloured account of a love episode in the author's youth, where the feelings displayed are all fairly creditable, except that we may suspect a little excess of colouring from an excusable vanity. When, however, we get further on to the various accounts

of the love passages with Lady Caroline Lamb, it is impossible not to feel that the writer is too much irritated to be severely truthful. A less sensitive and equally unscrupulous man might have produced a far more deadly effect by writing tenderly and respectfully; and a man with the common instincts of a gentleman, who abstained from making a secret that belonged partly to Lady Caroline Lamb public property, would have left the world poorer by an unimportant scandal, and in the opinion of men like Mr. Froude would have defrauded history. The instance in point is a tolerably good one. Lady Caroline Lamb, through her relations with Byron and Lord Melbourne, is more of a public character than women generally are. What Bulwer says about her, though it is very damaging to himself, is to some extent an explanation and a vindication of the great poet. Even so, was the matter one that ever needed to be cleared up? All the world knew that Lady Caroline Lamb was an impulsive woman, who threw herself at Byron's head, and that Byron grew tired of her after a time. The whole affair was a mere episode in the poet's life, and we should not understand him one whit the less if his history for that particular year of London life were a blank to us.

It may seem that there is a difference between the lives of artists or thinkers and those of practical men, statesmen or soldiers. The artist is often incapable of disentangling his own conception of the work he has done. Dr. Johnson got the credit of having written *The Traveller*, because he explained the opening lines so much better and more readily than Goldsmith was able to do. Even where the writer knows what he has meant, the world may attach greater importance to that which only ranked second in his estimation; just as Goethe is remembered by his poems, and not by his *Theory of Colours*. The statesman or soldier can at least tell us, if he will, what he was working for, and why each particular step was taken. The misfortune is that the General does not like to admit his blunders, or the statesman his insincerity. Napoleon's account of the battle of Waterloo is clear and vivid and masterly, as every account of a battle that Napoleon ever wrote is; but for truthfulness of detail any military critic would prefer Hooper or Lanfrey. We do not possess a biography of Cromwell from his own hand, but if we had one we can hardly doubt that it would give essentially the same view that his letters and speeches do; that religion would be thrust into the front, and policy and self-advancement kept

sedulously out of sight. When Frederic II wrote a history of his own time, he prefaced it with remarks on the wickedness of ambition and the miseries caused by war. "What is most disastrous," he said, "is the horrible pouring out of men's blood. Europe is like a shambles; there are bloody battles in every direction; it might be said that kings have resolved to desolate the earth." "The history of covetousness," he goes on sententiously to observe, "is the school of virtue. Ambition makes tyrants; moderation makes wise men." Anyone who took these phrases at their nominal value, and who knew nothing of Frederic II from his letters or the writings of his contemporaries, might well imagine that the most unprincipled among soldiers of fortune was a German counterpart of Marcus Aurelius. Nay, perhaps if we were better informed of the real history of the Roman Empire, Marcus Aurelius was a Roman Frederic II, with exquisite philosophy in his commonplace book, and dreams of ambition in his brain. The proofs which keep us from embracing this latter hypothesis in all seriousness—apart from the internal evidence of his writings—consist of a few fragments and notices that might be compressed into half a dozen pages.

When we have admitted, however, that a man cannot be expected to write with perfect knowledge or perfect truthfulness about himself, there remains the question whether he is not a competent judge of his own contemporaries and rivals. Of course this is disposing altogether of autobiography, and reducing us to the simple inquiry, whether the facts of a particular period are not best put into the biographical form by those who knew and studied the chief actors. The difficulty that meets us here is that as a rule the persons who have been best placed to observe are unwilling to record or are so strongly biased that their verdicts cannot be accepted. Clarendon is one of the best instances of a prominent actor in a great period sitting down to delineate the character of his contemporaries. He wrote when years had past over his head, and might be supposed to have softened the asperities of party feeling and to have obliterated old rivalries. If, however, we trusted Clarendon's *History* we should believe that Falkland was the noblest character of the civil war, and that Cromwell, though a man of very great powers, was unscrupulously bad. "Without doubt, no man with more wickedness ever attempted anything, or brought to pass what he desired, more wickedly, more in the face



and contempt of religion and moral honesty." Few will now doubt that Cromwell was eminently possessed both of religion and of moral honesty, though he may have put them aside now and again when ambition had to be served. What makes Clarendon's censure in this respect the more remarkable, is that his estimate of Cromwell's statesmanship is full and generous.

Lord Malmesbury's *Memoirs of an Ex-Minister* gives us another form of personal biography, in the shape of a diary, in which a man admirably placed to know what is really going on has jotted down the events and estimates of the day. How much of this is real history? Lord Malmesbury, for instance, tells us:—"The *Morning Post* has received orders from the French Emperor to attack me on every possible occasion. Mr. Borthwick, the editor, saw him at Paris, and got his orders from himself." Sir Algernon Borthwick has written to Lord Malmesbury indignantly denying that there is any truth in this charge, and Lord Malmesbury has reiterated his statement, courteously, but firmly, giving the name of the confidant of the French Emperor from whom his information came. The probabilities are that Sir Algernon Borthwick was not in the pay of the French Emperor, and did not receive orders from him, and was not even

consciously influenced, as an English paper supposes, by the one bribe to which newspaper editors are sometimes amenable—the promise of early information. What is conceivable is that, being a Napoleonist by conviction like his patron Lord Palmerston, Sir Algernon gave private assurances that he should support the Emperor's policy in London, and the Emperor's confidant interpreted these to proceed from a corrupt motive. Lord Malmesbury, good-natured as he is, seems to have been thoroughly annoyed by the opposition of the *Morning Post*; and ascertained that the substance of a letter he wrote to the English Ambassador had been communicated by the Emperor to the English ally. It is easy to understand how, feeling as he did and knowing what he did, Lord Malmesbury accepted his informant's statement, which will seem incredible to any English journalist, as true.

On the whole, the stock French phrase for biographies—"memoirs, to serve for the history" of a particular time—would seem to be that which best describes their value. They are not history, but they are the rough material out of which history is made. No man writes or can write the full truth about himself or other men, because no man thoroughly knows himself or his neighbours,

and also, it may perhaps be added, because men like to paint themselves a little better than they are. On the other hand, the most skilful apologist of his own actions is tolerably certain to let some damnatory evidence escape him, or if his literary skill enables him to escape this pitfall, will have to entrench himself in evasions or a reserve that are disposed of by other evidence. Talleyrand probably understood this when he directed his *Memoirs* to be withheld from publication for a certain term of years, that is, till the persons compromised were dead, and till the possibility of contradicting them from first sources was at an end. All this will, of course, be taken into account when his papers at last see the light, but he will still have the advantage of telling a good many stories his own way. Even this, however, is not always certain. Lady Lytton, as we now know, was prepared beforehand with a rejoinder to the cowardly attack made in her husband's name, and Alfred de Musset anticipated George Sand's history of their relations by entrusting his own version to a brother's care. Probably, at some future time, the scandalous memoir will disappear, together with the Society Paper.

## II.—CARICATURES

WHAT relation does the art of the caricaturist bear to satire? At the first blush it might almost seem as if the caricaturist were only a satirist with the pencil, and the satirist only a caricaturist with the pen. A moment's reflection, however, will show that while individual satirists have achieved immortality by their masterpieces, the caricaturist never rises beyond the collector's portfolio or the amateur's drawing-room table. We all know the story of Michael Angelo—introducing a troublesome Master of the Ceremonies into Hell in his picture of the Last Judgment; and it was, we think, Horace Vernet who introduced a rich Jew, with whom he had had a quarrel, into a picture of the Storming of Algiers, as a vagabond running off with a bag of treasure. Probably a good many such stories could be collected, but they do not affect the general fact that a painter or sculptor, as a rule

idealises what he touches, and invariably shrinks from attempting any general effect that shall call up only grotesque associations. Even where the artist is of the Dutch school, or is a pre-Raphaelite, careful only about accuracy of detail, and calling nothing that comes before him common or unclean, he is still careful to avoid exaggeration, and is held to have fallen short of art if he has provoked a smile. No doubt the satirist comes midway between the artist and the caricaturist. Like the caricaturist, he is more concerned with the moral he has to point than with fidelity of execution, and it is often easy to show the two craftsmen working at the same time to the same end. The *Anti-Jacobin*, which is none the less a satire in parts for being here and there an extravaganza, attacks the leaders of the French Revolution with the weapons of ridicule very much as Gillray and Rowlandson attacked them. The difference seems to be that literary satire, dealing as it does essentially with character and forms of thought, is restrained for the most part within the boundaries of probability; and as it appeals to a highly educated public, studies perfection of style. If it be mere declamation and invective it will not live. On the other hand, the caricaturist, dealing only with what is outward and visible, and

appealing very much to those whose brains are in their eyes, is constrained to rely upon gross effects for popularity. If he has not caught the humour of the mob, if he has been too subtle or too equitable, his work is lost.

It would not be easy to find a better example of the difference between satire and caricature than in Swift's attacks upon the Duke of Marlborough, and in the comic pictures, of English parentage, that illustrated the life and actions of the First Napoleon for our fathers. Whether Swift had any personal feeling against the great Englishman he attacked may be doubtful, but he certainly meant to write him down, and he was as unscrupulous as a great artist in literary work can be. Nevertheless, his portrait of the Duke is so admirably drawn that it has coloured history from that day to this. He assumes himself to be living at Rome in the time of the first triumvirate, and says that he should have been tempted to write a letter to each of the triumvirs, telling him that fault "which I conceived was most odious, and of worst consequence to the commonwealth." He then gives us a specimen of his quality in a letter to Crassus. "No man disputes the gracefulness of your person; you are allowed to have a good and clear understanding, cultivated

by the knowledge of men and manners, though not by literature; you are no ill orator in the Senate; you are said to excel in the art of bridling and subduing your anger, and stifling or concealing your resentments; you have been a most successful general, of long experience, great conduct, and much personal courage; you have gained many important victories for the commonwealth," etc. And "yet," Swift goes on to say, "you are neither beloved by the Patricians nor Plebeians at home, nor by the officers or private soldiers of your own army abroad. You are deeply stained with that odious and ignoble vice of covetousness, of which 100,000 instances are produced in all men's mouths." He goes on to tell a trivial story, how Marlborough wanted to keep on his wet boots rather than have them cut from his legs; recommends him to go in disguise among the common people that he may know how he is talked about, and to ask his best friends what his chief fault is. Then, having led up from a fair estimate of Marlborough's character to an exaggerated view of his own great failing, Swift proceeds to assert, most dishonestly, as we believe, that the Duke has sacrificed his troops by stinting their commissariat, and that he has protracted the war only that he

may be continued in his command. "The moment you quit this vice you will be a truly great man, and still there will be imperfections enough remaining to convince us you are not a God." The satire in this masterly performance is individual, and devoid of any broad moral significance, and in all likelihood unfair, but the likeness is essentially the man, chiselled in bronze to all time, with no impossible traits added, and forcing even Marlborough's friends and apologists to ask themselves if their hero was not a dangerous servant to the commonwealth.

Let us compare this masterly attack by a literary expert with the caricatures of the First Napoleon, which Gillray and Rowlandson and Cruikshank brought out in England. They take up the hero's life from childhood to the exile at Saint Helena. In one we get the young Bonapartes gnawing a shin of beef between them, while their barefooted mother sits on the ground, and the father swaggers about like a Corsican brigand, with a pistol in his belt. In another, Napoleon appears blowing up his schoolfellows by a scientifically constructed mine. His marriage is seized upon as an opportunity for representing his wife as Barras's mistress, and she is introduced dancing naked before the Director, while Napoleon looks



on as a humble spectator. The expedition to Egypt is commemorated fairly enough by engravings which show Napoleon pummelled by a British sailor, and unfairly by an engraving which represents him giving orders to poison the sick at Jaffa. "History," as Sir Archibald Alison says, "must acquit Napoleon of criminality in this matter." The flight from Egypt and the *coup d'état* of the 18th of Brumaire were fair game for caricature, and have not been overdone; but as soon as Napoleon began to conquer again the English prints became libellous. An engraving of the time represents him instructing an aide-de-camp, stationed behind a tree, to shoot General Desaix. Napoleon never loved any man so much, and a more atrocious calumny could hardly have been invented. With the peace of Amiens Napoleon got fair treatment for a time, but when the war began again the caricaturists relapsed into their old extravagant strain. For specimens of genuine bombast commend us to some of the engravings of this time. One represents poor half-witted George III as a giant who takes up the pigmy Napoleon, and looks at him through a magnifying glass; another shows us the royal family looking on while a miniature Napoleon manœuvres a little toy ship about a basin of

water. That all this braggadocio was no more than shouting to keep the courage up is shown by the ferocity of some of the sketches. One, for instance, of 1803, represents a countryman holding up Napoleon's bleeding head on a pitchfork. The slanders were continued. In 1804 Napoleon is shown watching the infliction of horrible tortures upon the wife of Toussaint l'Ouverture. It was difficult to vulgarise Napoleon's features if any resemblance was to be preserved, but Talleyrand's club foot is always a prominent object in the engravings in which he figures. Even the little King of Rome was caricatured from his infancy, and represented with the cloven hoofs and tail of a devil, or as threatening his mother with a dagger. When the tide of conquest turned, and the news of Leipzig arrived, Napoleon was represented as the Corsican toad under a harrow. There was no generous forbearance even when the final crash came, with the abdication and Elba. To English caricaturists, Napoleon still figured as the Corsican Bloodhound, or as led with a rope round his neck in a Rogue's March by Blucher. Even when he was sent to St. Helena he was depicted as the Devil of Milton expelled from heaven, and addressing the sun, who serves as a frame to the Prince Regent's head and

shoulders. By this time, however, a little reaction was setting in. Another engraving of the day represents Napoleon on the ground, and the Prince Regent kicking him, while some of the spectators cry out "Shame!" On the whole, however, it is painful to look through the caricatures of these twenty-five years, and to think that the greatest man of the century was thus ignobly held up to ridicule.

It may be said that the caricatures of George III's time represent a lower level of taste and refinement than exist now, and that Leech and Tenniel have elevated and transformed the art. With two or three notable exceptions this may be admitted. Probably there has never been a more kindly or genial comic journal than the London *Punch*, and its influence has told for good upon its English contemporaries. Still, wherever English national feeling is at all stirred, the old ferocity seems to be as strong as ever. It is not altogether pleasant for an Englishman to remember how Americans, and the noblest man in America—Abraham Lincoln—were steadily held up to savage ridicule, till the cause of the North triumphed and it became unsafe to laugh. The other prominent exception is the treatment still awarded to Ireland. From the days of O'Connell down to those of Mr. Parnell

the favourite weapon of the comic press has been to take the type of the lowest Irish rough and make it do duty for the Irishman. No doubt there is a mystical Ireland which often figures in engravings as a pretty barefooted young woman, but as her position is generally that of a beggar, or of a poor dependent, the Irish are not much conciliated by her introduction. At a time when the problem of how best to govern Ireland is taxing the ripest statesmanship, and when calmness and good temper are of the last importance, it is most deplorable that a high-spirited and sensitive people should have English hatred and contempt for them advertised in every shop window. The effect produced by a clever caricature can hardly be overrated. As a rule it tells very little against a native statesman, and indeed serves to advertise him. When, however, it is directed against a foreign sovereign or country the power attacked is apt to regard it as the outcome of a strong national feeling. The London *Punch* is almost as much dreaded on the Continent as the London *Times*.

Latterly, the art of some caricaturists has been taking a more subtle and artistic form. Instead of simply distorting the features, it has aimed at exaggerating a single expression so as to denote

the ruling passion. Hawthorne says in one of his novels, that a good photograph always catches the real thought of the face, the lines, whose purpose is imperceptible to the artist, being reproduced with terrible realism by the sun. There are two pictures in the Barberini Palace at Rome, popularly called of Beatrice Cenci and her mother, in which the change from a young spiritual girl's face to that of a simpering, foolish, middle-aged woman is expressed, unintentionally, with very striking significance. Curiously enough, among all the scores of malicious attempts to make Napoleon I appear ridiculous, none is so successful as a simple portrait, taken of him at Longwood when he had grown fat and common looking. An artist who could have foreseen the possibility of this change a few years before might have shown him up with considerable effect, and need not have resorted to such expedients as the devil's hoof and tails. It is a characteristic of this form of art that it lends itself to idealisation as readily as to ironical work. When John Brown's death was reported from Virginia, the first man to understand its real moral significance was Victor Hugo, and he issued an admirable etching of John Brown hanging from the gallows in an attitude that recalled the Crucifixion.

Altogether, a good history of caricatures would be a history of popular passion and ignorance. Less than the writer of songs, incomparably less than the satirist, has the caricaturist, as a rule, associated himself with those movements which have left men better and wiser than before. We possess a caricature of the earliest times. It is a representation of our Lord with an ass's head nailed to the cross, and underneath it some sportive pagan has written, "This is the god of Alexamenos." Throughout the Middle Ages the caricaturist was busy, but his wit in stone or wood, the representation of deadly sins, or satire on the clergy, served only to familiarise the mind with coarse and obscene images. In later times the caricaturist has never aimed at more than reflecting and exaggerating the feeling of the day. Catholic emancipation, the modification of the Penal Laws, free-trade in food, were all fought out on the platform and in the serious press, before the caricaturist went over to what was by this time a winning side. It can scarcely be said, either, that any great amends is made by a healthy exposure of moral vices. Gavarni's sketches of French domestic life, English jokes upon intoxication, seem rather designed to familiarise the public mind with the vice than to lash the sinner. It is

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in dealing with social foibles that the caricaturist is most successful. From the fop to the snob, from the party giver to the æsthete, he catches up the trifles that neither history nor satire would record, and embalms them in the most translucent of amber.

### III.—CYNICISM IN LITERATURE <sup>1</sup>

MR. SAMUEL BUTLER, who, we think, is still best known as the author of *Erewhon*, has published a pleasant little volume of selections from his previous works. They are of a sufficiently various kind. *Erewhon* was an attack in the form of a philosophical romance upon modern institutions, and in particular upon modern theology; the *Fair Haven* <sup>2</sup> repeated the onslaught on faith in the form of an ironical vindication of miracles. In his next three works Mr. Butler broke ground in science, attacking the school of Darwin, and he claims to have established the thesis that instinct is unconscious memory; while in *Alps and Sanctuaries* Mr. Butler makes what we may best describe as a Voltairian journey amongst a Catholic people. Mr. Butler is not eminently an original thinker, but he has what may be called an original humour,

<sup>1</sup> *Selections from Previous Works*, by Samuel Butler. London : Trübner & Co.

<sup>2</sup> Trübner, 1873.



which amuses itself by preference with speculations on questions of morality and religion. The impression which a serious person would derive from reading his works might easily be one of unmixed reprobation. Mr. Butler seems to be restrained by nothing except the demands of good style in his attacks upon everything which the Christian world has agreed for centuries past to regard as holy. On the other hand, a religious person with a little of Mr. Butler's temperament may note with satisfaction that he is constantly girding at scientific men and their conclusions, and that as a matter of fact he appears to prefer religion to unbelief and even to science. The prevalent tendency of his mind seems indeed to be intolerance of authority, and especially of whatever is conventional or formal. Mr. Butler quotes approvingly in one of his chapters the famous passage in which Buffon has argued that neither knowledge, nor thought, nor originality, but command of style, is the real passport to immortality. "The matter is foreign to the man, and is not of him; the manner is the man, himself." Certainly we may say of Mr. Butler that it is the way in which his arguments are put, rather than the arguments themselves, which attracts us in reading him. If we try to condense the volatile essence

of his thoughts, the residuum will be so thin and subtle as to be almost inconsiderable. This, however, is in fact a tribute to the skill with which he has selected his weapons. To have found out that what would be harmless as a pellet may be terribly potent as a gas, is to have made an important discovery in the art of war. Neither does it follow that because humour will not bear to be tested as argument it is therefore worthless. Humour has its own sphere, and, as it appeals to moods which are less liable to shift than thought, may, easily have a larger empire than argument. The *Tale of a Tub* is not unlikely to outlive all the controversial theology of Swift's time; if, indeed, it has not already outlived it and seen its burial.

The chief features of *Erewhon*, an imaginary commonwealth on the west coast of New Zealand, are the parts describing the reception given to inventions by the Erewhonians, what constituted crime amongst them, and what were the relations of Church and State. The first of these was, we think, Mr. Butler's most original conception, and it is a little curious that he has not reproduced the chapter describing it in this volume. He supposed the Erewhonians to have gone on inventing watches, printing presses, steam engines

and other mechanical appliances, till there appeared to be a danger that machines would supplant man for all purposes of toil. Then there arose a large party in the State demanding that all machinery should be annihilated, and, after a furious civil war, peace was concluded on the condition that only those inventions which had been made prior to a particular epoch should be tolerated. The watch was retained; the steam engine abolished. Now it is very possible to understand an economist of Conservative habits of thought using an illustration of this kind to show what the dangers of democracy might be; and it is just conceivable that an educated Socialist might imagine a Utopia of this sort in the interest of the working classes, though he would be more likely to represent the State as confiscating inventions, so that they might be employed for the benefit of the whole community. Mr. Butler's point of view seems to be altogether remote from politics, and essentially that of a pessimist. He appears to believe in an almost infinite possibility of substituting mere mechanical forces for individual human effort, and though we do not imagine he sympathises with the Erewhonian solution of the difficulty, in all likelihood he sees no other way out of it. "Give free play to invention," he seems to say, "and

you destroy humanity by taking their means of livelihood from the poor and the elevating necessities of toil from all men. Determine to preserve these, and you are bound to stifle thought." The ghastly dreariness of a view like this is self evident. Mr. Butler, however, is not in the least despondent, and appears to be sustained by a cheerful conviction that the sources of happiness consist, not in what the world is, but in how you take it.

The Erewhonian system of ethics is arrived at by inverting that usual among men. To us, moral offences are crimes against society that call for a penalty, and diseases, as a rule, are only matters of private concern. Mr. Butler wishes us to remember that crimes are often the result of some congenital imperfection; a crave for drink or a liability to frantic fits of passion, or an incapacity to calculate consequences, inherited from vicious parents. If a man pleaded these in a court of justice he would be told that there was no question of how he came to be tempted into crime, but whether he was guilty or not, and that society could not let him loose to transgress the law hereafter under the plea of an uncontrollable propensity. In the same way the Erewhonian judge tells the prisoner at the bar that he declines to enter

into the question of his elementary constitution, but has to consider the effects to society if he were allowed to go at large. "Your presence in the society of respectable people would lead the less able-bodied to think more lightly of all forms of illness; neither can it be permitted that you should have the chance of corrupting unborn beings." Being therefore guilty of pulmonary consumption, the criminal is sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour for the remainder of his life. On the other hand, when a leading citizen has defrauded a widow of her substance, what he does is to call in a "straightener," who orders him to pay a fine of double the amount to the State, puts him on an ascetic diet, and administers a flogging once a month for a year. We may all admit that the punishment of offenders should aim at reforming them rather than at taking vengeance; and some of us may go some way with the Erewhonians in thinking that a good many diseases, the results of profligacy or criminal negligence, and communicable to others, might very properly be punished by a term of penal servitude. The conclusion really insinuated goes further than this, and suggests that vice and virtue, being merely matters of constitutional diathesis, are no proper subjects for praise or blame. Of course vice is to

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be stamped out because it is a nuisance in society, but it ought to be cured with pills and dieting and to excite no more reprobation than a cold in the head.

The attack on the churches in *Erewhon* may be passed over with very brief notice, as it is one of the least successful parts in the book. The churches are represented as banks, which have a currency distinct from that of the State, which no one really uses, but in which it is supposed all transactions ought to be carried on. Every respectable person keeps an account at one of these banks, which are called musical, because their business is transacted to a musical accompaniment, but everyone takes care to make his balance as small as possible. What we take to be the test of failure in an illustration of this kind is that it should lend nothing to the argument, and the best passages in this chapter appear to lose more than they gain from the parable. For instance, when the narrator ventures to hint to one of the musical bank managers that the people in general are indifferent to the whole institution, "he said that it had been more or less true till lately, but that now they had put fresh stained glass windows into all the banks in the country, and repaired the buildings and enlarged the organs, and taken to

talking nicely to the people in the streets, and to remembering the ages of their children and giving them things when they were ill, so that all would henceforth go smoothly." This is effective, though rather commonplace, writing regarded as an attack upon Ritualism pure and simple; but it becomes incongruous when it is mixed up with the conduct of a commercial institution. The Bible often employs the analogy of treasure on earth and treasure in heaven, but the Bible does not mix up the heavenly treasure with such a mere accessory as music. If it may be permitted to conjecture how so great a master of allegory as Swift would have treated this subject upon the same lines, we may surely conceive him representing the introduction of music as a deviation from the charter of the bank, and part of a system for deluding the creditor with false payments—an opera instead of a dividend. Even this, however, would probably have been too far-fetched for Swift, who took care that his similes should be so extravagant as to carry a sense of scorn in them, and so clear as to be absolutely transparent.

It was probably his experience of the difficulty of handling metaphors that led Mr. Butler to adopt a different system in the *Fair Haven*, and to change the method of the *Tale of a Tub* for

that of the *Encyclopædia*, the parable attacking popular theology for an ironical defence of it. The *Fair Haven* is an examination of miracles, bringing out the strongest arguments against them, and affecting to overthrow these by the weakest that can be urged in their favour. In the volume before us Mr. Butler only reproduces the preface, which professes to be the life of a strong believer who for a time lapsed into unbelief, because he discovered inconsistencies in his teachers, or in their tenets. There is a good deal of broad fun in the description of the boy who is shocked to discover that a lady visitor does not say her prayers when she can get into bed unobserved, and who objects strongly to his mother's wish that he may become one of the two witnesses in the Apocalypse, and be massacred somewhere in the streets of London. But the humour will not bear analysis, and is essentially in the narrative, not in the point made. Further on, when the boy, grown up, is shocked to discover that the baptised children in a Sunday School are neither better nor worse than the unbaptised, we get upon very ordinary ground. The moment Mr. Butler passes from this to irony, he gains very perceptibly in real wit. Thus, for instance, he explains all the wanderings of honest doubt as so



many explorations that have to be made before Christianity can be comprehended in its absolute fulness. "The truth which is on the surface is rarely the whole truth. It is seldom until this has been worked out and done with, as in the case of the apparent flatness of the earth, that unchangeable truth is discovered. It is the glory of the Lord to conceal a matter; it is the glory of the king to find it out." Many people will object to the ironical quite as much as to the cynical style of argument. Our only concern is with their literary values. To us, the method that frankly declares something repulsive or unsound to be the best possible system and glories in it, is less artistic than the trick of argument by which the object attacked is praised for virtues that it does not possess in such a fashion that everyone understands the praise to be satire.

The great masters of satire and irony have, as a rule, been men who had strong convictions of their own. In the age of the reformation satire was the weapon of men who believed in the Bible or the revival of letters; in the eighteenth century of philosophers who had a blind, passionate belief in the powers of reason. Even of Swift it can hardly be doubted that he was sincere in his absolute scorn and contempt for the infidelity

of his day. Mr. Butler, though he is deeply interested in science as he is interested in theology, is not a man of scientific habits of thought. "Our English youth, who live much in the open air, and, as Lord Beaconsfield said, never read, are the people," he tells us, "who know best those things which are best worth knowing—that is to say, they are the most truly scientific." Let us ask ourselves for a moment what this means. A young English peer, with a sportsman's enjoyment of the moor and the covert, and a guardsman's disregard for cram of any kind, is compelled now and again to master some fragment of practical knowledge, and occasionally meets scientific men, who, if they find him intelligent, are flattered by his attention, and talk their best to him. Such a man may go to his grave without finding that he has wanted any knowledge he did not possess, but to call him scientific is surely an abuse of terms. Instinct and knowledge of men may guide him in deciding what scientific teachers he will believe, but he can know nothing of scientific conclusions without mastering a good many books, and will only be confused by these if he does not understand the nature of evidence. In another form Mr. Butler is only repeating Cowper's panegyric upon the village dame—

"Who knows, and knows no more, her Bible true.  
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew."<sup>1</sup>

The upper ten thousand, who learn their Darwin from stray passages in novels and the talk of dinner-tables, are admirably fitted to be a receptive medium of knowledge; and it would be absurd to expect that the mass of men can ever acquire it for themselves. To say, however, that it is these people that have the firmest grip of their knowledge, simply because they have got at results, and do not trouble themselves about processes, is to invert the scientific point of view, which regards the method—being generally applicable—as more important than the individual fact. Neither is there much more conviction in Mr. Butler's argument that though the possession of knowledge is not incompatible with beauty, its pursuit seems to be so since a great many scientific and literary men look ugly and disagreeable. Certainly, the pursuit of knowledge has never been supposed to make its votaries beautiful for ever; and it may be that "the masterpieces of Greek and Italian art" are "the truest preachers of the truest gospel of grace." What we demur to is the assumption that knowledge and beauty are identical, and that those who have not attained to beauty have

<sup>1</sup> Truth, 327.

not attained to knowledge. What Mr. Butler really means is that it is pleasanter to enjoy than to create.

Mr. Butler's contribution to science is the suggestion that instinct is hereditary memory, and that when, for instance, a dog which has never seen a wolf, is thrown into convulsions of fear by smelling an old piece of wolf's skin, it is because the smell brought up a reminiscence inherited from remote ancestors of the partiality wolves feel for eating little dogs. We have seen a cat thrown into a paroxysm of terror by being introduced to the carcase of a wild turkey. Will it be argued that wild turkeys ever molested cats, and is any bird of prey such a danger to cats that instinctive dread of a large bird is likely to pass into the system? "The duckling hatched by the hen makes straight for the water." The duckling brought up by the hen will acquire all the habits of a land bird; it will not take to the water except by compulsion. What seems to be true is that the duckling having two examples before it, instinctively imitates its own kind rather than the race of its foster parent. However, we are not much concerned with the truth or falsehood of Mr. Butler's theory. What we would point out is its curious affinity to a conservative and materialistic theory of the universe. Christi-

anity teaches us, and all systems of law and ethics assume, that we are in a state of probation here, that we determine our own lives, and that our acts and thoughts are our good and bad angels.

Mr. Butler holds that our most solid notions are memories from past existences which we bring with us into the world, and that whatever we learn here is acquired in a self-conscious and bewildering manner. "It is the young and fair," he says, "who are the truly old and the truly experienced; it is they alone who have a trustworthy memory to guide them . . . When we say that we are getting old, we should say rather that we are getting new or young, and are suffering from inexperience, which drives us into doing things which we do not understand, and lands us eventually in the utter impotence of death. The kingdom of heaven is the kingdom of little children." This is Platonism inverted with a vengeance. Instead of the child coming into the world with God's thoughts in its mind, and trailing clouds of glory from its divine home, we are asked to believe, not only what is quite conceivable up to a certain point, that it inherits the taint of licentiousness or cruelty, or fetish worship or inaccurate processes of reasoning from its savage ancestry, but that these are the most valuable

parts of its knowledge. The present generation can add nothing to them except by transmitting unconscious processes of reasoning to its own descendants. Certainly, if this is the true theory of man, Mr. Butler's cynicism is justified. Naturally enough his ultimate theory of society is that the professions will assuredly one day become hereditary. In this way the transmitted instincts of a hundred generations of painters and lawyers, instead of vitalising and diversifying the whole race, will be concentrated in castes of unapproachable excellence! Probably, as in *Erewhon*, new inventions will be excluded from the world when it has reached this stage, as there cannot be a hereditary aptitude for manipulating fresh discoveries.

Mr. Butler is too glaringly irreverent and too little academical in his style to be accounted a disciple of Mr. Matthew Arnold, but he lands himself in pretty much the same conclusions. "Starting from premises which both sides admit, a merely logical Protestant," he tells us, "will find himself driven to the Church of Rome." "On the other hand, as good a case could be made out for placing reason as the foundation, inasmuch as it would be easy to show that a faith to be worth anything must be a reasonable one." Having thus placed himself, like the school-

man's donkey, between two equally attractive bundles of hay, Mr. Butler decides that we are sometimes to bite at one and sometimes at the other. "A man's safety lies neither in faith nor reason, but in temper—in the power of fusing faith and reason, even when they appear most mutually destructive." What this practically means, of course, is that we are to make up a composite religion for ourselves with no great regard for consistency or for abstract truth. Before a man elects to do this he must have satisfied himself that abstract truth is not to be obtained, and when he has made up his mind about that he will probably not be very careful to have a religion at all. Mr. Butler characteristically tells us that "in the rough homely common sense of the community to which we belong we have as firm ground as can be got." This, of course, means that the worship of Mumbo Jumbo is as good for an African as popular Protestantism for an Englishman.

The distinction between the cynic, the humorist, and the satirist is a strongly marked one. Both the cynic and the humorist find food for mirth in the foibles of humanity, but the humorist glides lovingly over foibles and frailties, the cynic lays them bare ruthlessly, and gloats over the exposure. The humorist inclines to sentiment, the cynic to

wit. The humorist has the wider range, conversing, as it were, with all animated nature, while the cynic invariably lingers as if fascinated in the neighbourhood of man. That the impulse to observe and describe is artistic in both separates them from the satirist, who is essentially a prophet, drawing his moral lessons from the contrasts of good and evil. Of the three the satirist approaches nearest to poetry; but perhaps his superiority in this respect over the humorist is only because metrical forms are more manageable by those whose indignation is almost bound to express itself in declamation or epigram, than by those who aim at expressing delicate differences, giving subtle or suggestive hints, and at times conveying their thoughts by reticences. To those who remember that Jaques was a poet's creation it will seem possible that Sterne and Jean Paul might also have made verse the vehicle of humour if they had been so minded—though perhaps not so perfectly as prose. The cynic stands on a different and lower level. His work cannot be put into any form that is congenial to the play of fancy or the localisation of feeling. It differs from poetry, as the articulation of a skeleton or a pathological specimen differs from an artist's rendering of the human form.



#### IV.—QUESTIONS OF CASUISTRY

WITHIN the last few weeks the charge of cannibalism appears to have been brought home to the survivors of the Greely expedition, and to the rescued sailors of the yacht *Mignonette*. Public sympathy, we are told, is very much excited in favour of the persons incriminated in the latter case, though the precise charge is that they killed their victim, who, however, was mad from drinking salt water, before eating him. It seems reasonable enough that a fund should be raised to defend men who are too poor to secure the services of the ablest counsel themselves; and it is not difficult to understand a strong sentiment of compassion for offenders who have endured such protracted agony from exposure, and who find themselves put on their trial for life just as they have escaped the sea. Public opinion in England, however, appears to look beyond these extenuating circumstances, and to regard it as inevitable and right

that men should preserve their own lives without regard to another man's right to live. Mr. Leigh Smith, who was lately shipwrecked in the Arctic regions, and who only brought his crew away by great good fortune, has been interviewed by an irrepressible *Pall Mall* reporter, and says that if he were reduced to straits he would allow his men to eat human flesh if they liked it, but not to draw lots or murder. Dr. Neale, who accompanied Mr. Leigh Smith, is of opinion that men who had endured a great deal of privation together would gain nothing worth taking into account by eating an emaciated comrade. It is satisfactory to know that in the cases where there is the strongest temptation to cannibalism the advantage derived from it is extremely small, but the argument is very far from being concluded when we know this. Probably most people will agree with Mr. Leigh Smith that the line ought to be drawn between eating human flesh under the pressure of dire necessity and killing someone, who, it may be, is a maniac, and certain to die, for the purpose of eating him. Putting moral sentiment out of the question, and reducing everything to sheer utilitarianism, there is one excellent reason why fellow sufferers should not prey upon a comrade in whom there is yet life. If the rule

was once established that they could, nothing more ghastly can well be conceived than the relations of men in peril to one another. The weak would combine against the strong; every man would sleep in dread of his life; and the suspicions and the ambuscades would be renewed day by day. It is the general and strong revulsion against cannibalism and a fortunate superstition that human flesh is unwholesome, which have enabled so many men in extreme peril to bear everything rather than raise their hands against one another.

Putting aside this one particular case, with its ghastly surroundings, which it is not pleasant to dwell upon, we may turn to the question whether it is allowable to save one's own life at the expense of another man's. In a certain general and abstract way, society has decided that it is. No one feels any particular scruple at being represented by soldiers in a terrible war, and no private person, as a rule, feels bound to tender his services for a cholera hospital. What is more, a general who can extricate his army by sending a few hundred, or it may be a few thousand men, to certain death, does it without the smallest hesitation; and he and his soldiers would be held to have acted very wrongly if, from a false point of honour, they neglected to save themselves at the

expense of their comrades. On the other hand, a man clinging to a spar, who pushes it away from the drowning persons around him or perhaps forces one of them to leave hold of it, is generally held to have done a detestable action. There are two stories connected with wolves which show pretty clearly within what limits the instinct of self-preservation is allowed to prevail. In one, a Russian peasant woman, finding that her sledge is pursued by wolves that are gaining upon her, throws out first one child and then another, gaining just enough time to enable her to reach the nearest village in safety. When she tells the story of what she has done, an indignant peasant cleaves her to the ground with his axe. Probably we shall all share something of his resentment, yet it will appear certain, on reflection, that the woman could not have saved the children by throwing herself out to the wolves. Left to themselves, with no one to hold the reins, the horses would undoubtedly have overturned the sledge, and all would have perished. Probably, too, in this particular case, the woman expected to save one child by the sacrifice of the others and was led on one by one to surrendering all. What makes the case so terrible is that we assume a mother to be a monster if her love for

her children is not stronger than the instinct of self-preservation, and than common sense. Popular sentiment, in fact, demands that the woman should have killed herself uselessly, and it is certain that no ordinary woman could have known happiness or kept her reason after assisting at such a tragedy. The other story is one of a very different kind. In this, which is from Sweden, a nobleman and his wife are being driven by their old family servant through a forest, when they find that a pack of wolves is coming up with them. The coachman suddenly dismounts, puts the reins into his master's hands, and tells him to drive on while he gives himself up to the wolves. With the little start thus given him, and the lightened weight for the horses, the nobleman goes safely to his destination. In this case the action of the servant is, of course, heroic, and the question must be whether his master had any right to take advantage of so much courage and devotion. Putting feudal feelings aside, it would seem as if the more highly placed and better educated man was the one who ought to have set the example of dying. In that case, however, there would have been the additional and painful moral problem, whether the wife was not bound to die at her husband's side. That one of the

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three was bound to do what was done, and that the other two were justified in profiting by it, can hardly be doubted. Nevertheless, one feels that the man who escaped must have been saddened and humiliated for life.

Questions of life and death are not the only ones in which it is possible to have a conflict of various duties. The case of Enoch Arden has had a great many parallels. In one well authenticated story, a young woman of great personal attractions had married a private soldier, and was on her way with him to Canada when the ship foundered in mid-ocean during a storm. The women were hastily thrust into boats, the troops were left in the sinking vessel, and never heard of again. When the boats at last reached the coast of America, the misfortunes and beauty of the young widow attracted a good deal of attention, and an officer, falling in love with her, sent her to a boarding school to be educated, and presently married her. Their married life was one of singular happiness till one day the wife recognised her first, and, of course, her only real husband, in an orderly sent with a message from the commanding officer of another regiment that was then passing through the town. He had been picked up clinging to a spar, but believed

the boat which carried his wife to have been lost. Changed as she was by years, and dress, and position, the wife might have defied recognition, but carried away by a tumult of conflicting emotions she rushed up into her bedroom, put on the old dress which she kept by her, came downstairs again and was recognised. The sequel is a very sad one. The officer had to give up a wife whom he loved; the wife to return to a husband whom she did not care for, and for whom she was now unsuited; while the husband, being allowed an annuity for his wife's sake by her second husband, contracted habits of drink. In this case it is difficult not to think that the wife ought resolutely to have faced the situation, and to have taken the responsibility of keeping a secret on the inviolability of which the happiness of all depended. No injury was done to public morality if she abided by a marriage which was contracted in perfect innocence. At the same time, we are bound to remember the old adage that hard cases make bad law. In this instance we know what actual bad results followed. It is not certain that an opposite course would have been more fortunate. The wife, if she was sensitively conscientious, might have broken down under the pressure of her terrible secret,

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and lost health or the power to make her second husband happy. The first husband might have taken to drink without the excuse of an annuity, and his wife, if she followed his fortunes from a distance, might then have believed that it was for want of her own restraining influence. What the story really seems to indicate is the want of some provision in the English law by which a husband, separated for years from his wife, and whom his wife is justified in believing dead, shall cease to have any claim upon her.

We all remember the famous controversy with the Jesuits, in which Pascal denounced the doctrine of reserve. It is probable that the order has never to this day recovered from that scathing exposure; and that Catholic priests generally incur the odium of believing that it is right to do a little wrong that a great good may be achieved; to tell a little falsehood that a soul, or many hundred souls, may be saved. We have ourselves heard a Catholic ecclesiastic of some distinction defend this on the ground that if he could save his neighbour's soul by putting his own in danger, he was bound to run the risk. It may safely be said that in this particular instance experience is conclusive against the Jesuit logic, and that for one convert made by an imposture the Church



has lost ten believers alienated by the moral repulsion which men feel when they are quite uncertain whether their teacher believes what he says. In fact, that unconditional and minute veracity is necessary to the very existence of every society, religious or civil, seems to be pretty well demonstrated; and the tendency of the times is to plain dealing in diplomacy, probity in trade, and a preference for unembroidered unambiguous speech. Meanwhile, there are some familiar exceptions in which the world has agreed to tolerate insincerity. One instance may be seen every day in the Divorce Court. A man is scarcely expected to admit the truth about his relations with a woman with whom he has sinned. The baseness of denouncing her after he has tempted her to do wrong, seems less venial than a perjury which practically does not count for much in the evidence taken. Even here, however, the toleration of falsehood leads to very serious consequences, for it destroys half the value of the sworn evidence which a really innocent witness can give on behalf of a really innocent woman. A more pardonable kind of falsehood is that which the inhabitant of an enslaved country tells when he is summoned to give evidence that will lead the noblest and best around him to prison or to the block. A man

who has been hearing revolt talked in every society he enters for the last three months, and who is himself, perhaps, concerned in a conspiracy, is called suddenly before the governor of the province, and questioned in such a way that his silence may be just as damaging as his speech. Assume, for instance, that a country gentleman is asked to say whether A and B, with whom he is in intimate relations, are concerned in any plot against Government. It is quite obvious that when he refuses point blank to answer, A and B will at once be set down as guilty. Take, again, the case of a man who from mere motives of humanity has concealed a rebel, and knows that the fugitive will be shot on the spot if he is found. It is difficult to imagine any man who would not sooner take the load of perjury on his soul than give up a man, who had trusted in his honour, to death. Neither can it quite be said that a man ought not to put himself in such a position. Civil war would be more ghastly than it is if a hunted man could not hope to be taken in and sheltered from pursuit now and again, even in the house of a neutral, or it may be an enemy.

On the whole, though we no longer possess the institution of a "scruple shop," as Cavalier undergraduates profanely called the conference

which used to meet at Oxford under the Protector to discuss cases of conscience, it cannot be said that the occupation of the casuist is altogether gone. Indeed, *Vanity Fair* contrives to interest a good many readers by asking and solving a "hard question" every week. In most instances these problems appear to be rather easy than hard when they deal with moral difficulties; and indeed the straightforward rule of right is so habitually the safe rule to follow that exceptions may practically be distrusted. Englishmen, at least, are not often mixed up in revolutions, and an innocent bigamy does not happen once in a million of marriages. Now and again, however, some question like that of cannibalism under extreme pressure frightens us out of our proprieties, and shows us that the ethics of ordinary life are not always adequate for the demands of a great emergency.

## V.—THE GRAND STYLE

“MEN are feasting at Genoa: men are dying at Naples—I go to Naples”, are the words in which King Humbert lately declined an invitation from the municipality of Genoa, and there seems to be a general consent in the press that the words were worthy of the occasion. Will they seem so to a later age? That King Humbert’s act was a grand one will not be disputed. That the words of his telegram exactly correspond to the noble thought which animated him will appear certain. Probably, too, no one will care to dispute that for reasons of statesmanship King Humbert was thoroughly justified in letting his subjects see that he understood the true nature of his duties. There may be thousands of Italians to whom the character of their monarch’s act will be brought more vividly home by a nicely balanced antithesis. What may perhaps be asked hereafter will be if there is not something a little

too self-conscious and theatrical about the composition of the royal message, and whether a fine act does not lose a little of the simplicity that is its greatest charm when the world sees that it has been very accurately thought out with a setting of brilliant words. It may be said that in any criticism of this kind we are bound to take account of the difference between southern and northern natures, and that we must allow for a little expansiveness in the Italian where we should demand a good deal of reserve in the Englishman. Our greatest men have eminently not been makers of fine phrases. Nelson's signal at Trafalgar is perhaps the best instance of a happy phrase that could be quoted from all English history; and we know that its generalising form was determined by the want of proper machinery to convey Nelson's original and more simple meaning. The only sentence with which Wellington's name is associated—the famous "Up guards and at them," is now transferred in a less pungent form to one of Wellington's subordinates, and would never have possessed the smallest interest for anyone if it had not been for the results of Waterloo. If we add to these Walton's despatch, "I have taken and destroyed the Spanish fleet, as per margin," we get pretty much the highest level of which Eng-

lishmen seem capable. To order the accomplishment of a great act as if it were common everyday duty, to report a victory as if there were nothing strange in it, are the characteristics of this style. In the cases quoted above there can be little doubt that there was no particular attempt at literary effect. Nelson is said to have thought over his signal for a few minutes; but Walton probably cut his despatch short because he disliked despatch writing, and thought that the facts of the victory would speak for themselves.

Two or three generations ago there can be little doubt that phrase-making played an important part in politics, especially among the French. Louis XVI had a literary correspondent who used to prime him with royal epigrams. "Your Majesty will soon be going to the races; you will find a notary entering the bets of two princes of the blood; when you see him, Sire, make the remark: 'What is the use of this man? Ought there to be written contracts between gentlemen? Their word ought to be enough.'" The whole scene actually came off as was planned, and the courtiers were full of admiration. "What a happy thought, and how kingly! that is his style." Probably it was the same prompter to whom we owe the still more elaborate scene when

Louis XVI pointed to some carts going out to carry wood to the poor of Paris, and refused to join a sledging pleasure party, with the remark that these were his sledges. Napoleon was never at a loss for a grandiose thought or a terse expression, and no one has ever suspected him of borrowing his style; but when the Bourbon dynasty was restored, the fabrication of royal utterances began instantly. Louis XVIII was credited on the day of his entry into Paris with the remark, "There is nothing changed; only a Frenchman the more in Paris." The remark was, in fact, coined by Talleyrand and inserted by authority in the gazettes of the day, without the King having even had the trouble to utter it. It may certainly be said that the King was better served by his Minister in this instance than he could have been by himself. The words Talleyrand put into his mouth are such that they might have seemed to occur naturally to any man, except for the simple fact that they were quite untrue. What must have struck Louis himself was, that the Paris he passed through was completely changed—in buildings, in population and in ideas—from the Paris of the monarchy. What undoubtedly struck the people was that their new king represented an old and a strange order of things. Talleyrand's

art lay in insinuating that there was to be no change, by denying that there had been any, and the conquered people were glad to flatter themselves that their King had forgotten the past.

Among Americans, who seem to have a greater gift of speech than Englishmen, the fashion is to prefer racy, idiomatic, and almost vulgar sayings. The tendency is no doubt derived from the realism of the American mind. An American understands instinctively that a rough soldier like Cambronne, fighting for the bare life, maddened with the foretaste of defeat, and furious at the summons to surrender, is much more likely to explode in a coarse oath, as Cambronne actually did, than to reply with such a stilted phrase as "The old guard dies, but never surrenders." Thackeray's Prince, who talked several hundred lines of blank verse when it was a question of asserting his claim to the throne by arms, was not more fantastic than a trooper coining epigrams on a battle field would be. "I reckon I shall be of more use when I am hanged than I could be in any other way," John Brown's last words, went home none the less for their simplicity, and forced American society to ask itself what state of evil that was against which the noblest man was bound to protest, even at the cost of the gallows. President Lincoln owed a



great deal of his popularity to the fact that while he reflected the heroic exaltation during the War of Independence in all his thoughts and acts, he habitually joked in a way that relieved the sense of tension. Garibaldi probably owed it partly to his intercourse with Englishmen and Americans that he never degenerated into bombast in addressing his followers. To those who watched his career there is nothing extravagant in the words he addressed to his Sicilian volunteers;—"Men who follow me must learn to live without food, and to fight without ammunition." On the other hand, Northern taste recoils instinctively from such a proclamation as the Roman Triumvirs put out in 1849:—"Arise and conquer. One prayer to the god of battles, one thought to your faithful brethren, one hand to your arms. Every man becomes a hero! This day decides the fate of Rome and of the Republic." That is the kind of rhetoric one expects to hear on the stage.

The grand style has had its day in conversation. No one can read Boswell's faithful reproductions of dinner talk without feeling that there was more or less effort to sustain a part in all the talkers he has thought worthy of commemoration. Johnson, whose reputation with after ages rests almost entirely on what he spoke, scarcely at all on what

he wrote, passed a very curious criticism on his contemporaries when he said there was seldom any conversation worthy of being remembered. "Why, then, meet at table?" asked Boswell, not unnaturally. "Why, to eat and drink together," said Johnson, "and to promote kindness; and, Sir, this is better done when there is no solid conversation, for when there is, people differ in opinion, and get into bad humour, or some of the company who are not capable of conversation are left out, and feel themselves uneasy. It was for this reason Sir Robert Walpole said he always talked bawdy at his table, because in that all could join." Society must indeed have been rather an elaborate business when so clever a man as Wilkes prepared for a party, by reading up like a student for examination; and when George Selwyn, whom the King would not appoint to anything at court because of his wit, was accused of owning

"A plenteous magazine of retail wit,  
Vamped up at leisure for some future hit."

At present it seems as if there were a common consent to take refuge in the merest trivialities and fashionable slang from anything like literary pretentiousness. This has the advantage of Sir Robert Walpole's expedient, but it leaves something to be desired when genius or knowledge

are of the company. Genius, however, is itself glad now and then to resort to very simple expedients. "When I visited Goethe, in Weimar," says Heine, "and stood before him, I involuntarily glanced at his side to see whether the eagle was not there with the lightning in his beak. I was nearly speaking Greek to him, but as I observed that he understood German, I stated to him in German that the plums on the road between Jena and Weimar were very good. I had for so many long winter nights thought over what lofty and profound things I would say to Goethe if ever I saw him. And when I saw him at last I said to him that the Saxon plums were very good. And Goethe smiled." Judging from what one knows of Goethe, it is just conceivable that if he had been approached with questions about metaphysics or art he would have smiled in a different spirit, and would have set himself to work to mystify the young stranger.

The place where one might have expected the grand style to be most thoroughly naturalised, and to linger longest, is the English House of Commons. There we get topics very often of supreme and far-reaching interest handled by men of the highest culture. Nevertheless, the grand style may be said to have begun in Parliament

with the elder Pitt, and to have died out with Burke. The records of Chatham's speeches are so imperfect that it is difficult to understand the ascendancy exercised by a man whose best passages appear tawdry and declamatory as one reads them in cold blood, except by the supposition that Chatham's genius commanded reverence for all he said. Of Burke, putting aside the well known fact that he came latterly to be known as the dinner bell of the House of Commons, there is reason to believe that his best speeches were rather injured than assisted by his perpetual straining after effect. Thurlow once told him that he had "showered a bright confusion of ideas" on his subject; and Horace Walpole, who admitted his genius, speaks of him as often losing himself "in a torrent of images and copiousness." Later orators have carefully avoided the attempt at sustained rhetoric, with perhaps the single exception of Mr. Shiel, who was always listened to with breathless attention, but who never took first class rank as an effective debater. Mr. Canning and the late Lord Derby habitually led up by grave, closely reasoned periods to those magnificent sentences, some of which have passed, so to speak, into the English language. The greatest master of language whom the present generation has

known, Mr. Bright, was remarkable for the studied simplicity of his orations. Probably, if any one passage of modern eloquence could be picked out as conspicuous for its effect, it would be that in which Mr. Bright held the House awed and silent while he denounced the continuance of the Crimean War:—"The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land; you may almost hear the very beating of his wings. There is no one to sprinkle with blood the lintels and the side posts of our doors that he may spare and pass on; but he calls at the castle of the noble, the mansion of the wealthy, equally as at the cottage of the humble, and it is on behalf of all these classes that I make this solemn appeal." We may rely upon it that these fine words were not the less effective because they had been preceded and led up to by homely arguments about the collapse of industry and the lessening of wages.

## VI.—OPTIMISM

WHEN we ask what assurance we can derive, from experience or from philosophy, that the order of society will not change decisively for the worse, the reply is not at first reassuring. There seems to be a general agreement that the discoveries of science may just as easily be used to enslave or to impoverish the human race as to emancipate it, or to make it more prosperous. Factory labourers are nominally better paid than the village labourer of the last century, but scarcely anyone doubts that the average village labourer led a better and purer life, was less exposed to periods of extreme distress, and brought up a healthier family. Railways and arms of precision are doing a great deal to abbreviate war, but they have put the weak races of the earth altogether at the mercy of the strong, and the blood tax was never heavier than it is now. Therefore, though science gives us a great deal to boast of, and may enter for

a great deal into our hopes, the most that can be said in this respect is that it is like a splendid inheritance, which gives the wise man twenty years' start in life, and precipitates the prodigal into irretrievable ruin. First and last, we have to fall back on ourselves, and to ask whether the springs of will are stronger than they were, the purpose of life nobler, the mental vision keener, and if the habit of unselfish action has become more and more a part of our moral being. There can be no doubt that we are perpetually changing our whole moral point of view. Mere local patriotism is much less a factor in history now, when men can change their country by living out of it or by taking out letters of naturalisation, than it was in old times, when a fatherland could scarcely be conceived beyond the four walls of a man's native city. So, again, with the institution of the family. From being the foundation and corner stone of the State, marriage is tending to be little more than a contract for mutual convenience, which the State regulates pretty much on the same principles as it might a mercantile partnership. The power of a father over his children is being perpetually restrained by modern legislation. Socially, the strongest church in the world wields only a very small power compared with that

which the churches of Rome and Geneva exercised three or four centuries ago. It is not merely the power over life and individual fortunes that have been lost, but the power to control legislation, and to exercise more or less a complete censorship over the press. Briefly, then, we find that there is a marked decrease of patriotism or loyalty in politics, a relaxation of family ties, and an emancipation from the influences of religious faith. Side by side with this, society is becoming more complicated, and the need of organisation and guidance is getting to be more sensibly felt day by day. Some of the old supports have been cut away, and it looks as if the new ones were not yet fairly in their place.

In answer, it seems possible to show that there have been certain great advances in morality all over the world. Respect for human life has reached a point that would have been absolutely inconceivable even one century ago. The tendency all the world over is to abolish punishment by death, to stamp out duelling, to punish negligence that ends fatally like a crime, and to restrict the horrors of war to actual combatants. When we look at a country like China we see the difference. China has an old civilisation and a religion with a very lofty morality, but the mere idea that



human life can be sacred seems not to be entertained by anyone. When an insurrection has to be suppressed, the people of the province, innocent or guilty, are stamped out, literally, by millions. When prisoners, even of rank, are taken, it is as likely as not that they will be mutilated and put to death. In other words the Chinese are a little more pitiless than German armies were at the time of the Thirty Years' War, and we regard Chinamen as barbarians because we forget what our own ancestors tolerated. Death is not the worst outrage that a conqueror may inflict upon his fellow men. Many of the noblest men of past generations—reformers of faith and science, or patriots—were tortured during imprisonment, that they might be forced to confess or to recant. Something like torture, no doubt, exists at this moment in Russian prisons, but even there it takes the rude form of starvation or blows, and is not elaborated with the rack or the boot. Looking at Western Europe, does anyone dream now that a possible Galileo could be racked for scientific discovery in Rome, or a young man of family tortured and beheaded in France upon a doubtful charge of sacrilege? We carry the feeling of respect for the body so far that flogging has been abolished in most countries,

and is only retained where it still exists as a punishment for offences of a very aggravated or a very dangerous kind.

It may be said that in this instance it has been the interest of everyone to put down punishments of extreme severity. That is only partially true. It has been the interest of a good many people to mitigate the penalties on free thought or political opposition, but it was not at all an obvious interest to lessen the apparent safeguards for life and property. Nine people in ten believed that forgers and highwaymen would multiply when their offences were no longer visited with the gallows, and the carrying of the reforms was due to a genuine moral sentiment. A clearer instance, however, of moral sentiment trampling over interest has been the abolition of forced labour all over the world. In England it cost £20,000,000 to abolish it in the West Indian Islands alone; in North America it cost many hundred millions and tens of thousands of lives; and in France, Germany, and Russia, the abolition was at the time a very costly experiment, and opposed by a great many plausible reasons and honest prejudices. The class that made the change has been almost in every instance a class that would suffer by it. In England, for instance,

the men whom Wilberforce and Brougham and Buxton led were mostly men of the commercial middle class, who were bound to suffer indirectly if the trade of our richest colonies was destroyed, and who had to pay the greater part of the indemnity. So, again, in our later factory legislation. The movement for limiting the hours of labour for women and children has not proceeded to any appreciable extent from the working class. It has come from so-called sentimentalists of the upper and middle ranks of society; and it has been so strong that without support from below it has triumphed over a great deal of economic prejudice, over the interests of factory employers, and over the class feeling of the numerous Conservatives, who regard it as a matter of principle to support capital against labour.

Even more remarkable has been the success of the movements for giving married women something like equal rights with men over property, and for admitting women generally to the professions. From the earliest times women, as a rule, have had no political rights, and no power of influencing the legislature of any country. Their organisations to obtain legal reform of any kind have, as a rule, been very insignificant matters, just enough to keep a question before the public,

but not enough to force it upon rising men as "a good cry." If anyone proposed now, for the first time, that a man by marriage should become possessed of his wife's whole estate, the suggestion would, of course, be scouted indignantly; but the old law grew up gradually, and was part of a very compact system under which the husband assumed all the wife's responsibilities. Having once become rooted in custom and public opinion, it was very difficult to demolish. Men of a Conservative turn of mind argued that cases of grievance were very rare, that wherever a property was large it was pretty sure to be protected by settlements, and that where a property was only nominal it was not worth while to protect it by establishing a principle which would perhaps carry disunion into married life, and which would certainly make it difficult for creditors to know against which partner they were to recover. So, again, the practice having grown up of excluding educated women from every profession but that of teachers, or actresses, or singers, the proposal to let them be Government clerks, or doctors, or lawyers, was received at first with all possible derision and hatred. By this time, the right of married women over their property and their labour has been secured to them almost every-

where; and it has been apparent that there were many thousands of wrongs needing to be righted. The other change is slowly making its way; most slowly, of course, where it is opposed by an organised trades union in the shape of a learned profession. The only explanation of reforms of this kind can be that they seemed manifestly just, and that self-interest was outweighed in the struggle with morality.

Take, again, the protection of children and animals. The father, by all primitive custom, has the right of life and death over his children. The father by the recognised practice of modern nations may not stint his children of food or clothing, or put them to work beyond their strength, or sell the girls to infamy, and is even bound to see that they receive proper schooling. In several recent cases the Court of Chancery has deprived a parent of immoral habits or erratic opinions of the control over children, whose future prospects in life might be injured by unfortunate surroundings in early years. In the case of poor children whose parents are drunken or profligate, the State habitually taxes itself to give them a proper bringing up. Sixty-three years ago animals of every kind were outside the protection of the law. They are now guarded against overwork

and insufficient feeding, and wanton mutilation for purposes of sport, and even to some extent against the specious barbarities of the vivisectionist. No Benthamite theory of human action will explain legislation of this kind plausibly. For all practical purposes animals were protected by the self-interest of their owners. The State has interposed on moral grounds to save an insignificant minority from being sacrificed to carelessness or brutality.

It is sometimes argued that religious convictions are not as strong as they were in old times, and we may certainly admit that there is an indisposition to believe that heretics will incur hell hereafter, or ought to be punished with fire in this world. It is not altogether a change for the worse that men should allow a larger liberty to speculation, and so long as the State refuses to burn it is difficult to see how martyrs can be manufactured. Here and there of course, we get hundreds of educated men throwing up preferment in England to become Catholics or Freethinkers, or in Scotland that they may join the Free Kirk; and the Catholics of Poland, the old Lutherans of Prussia, and the Haugianer of Sweden have had to submit to a good deal of actual persecution in modern times. Meanwhile, that the fervour for truth is not diminished may be seen

in regions outside theology. The State, in parts of Europe, has inherited the old tendency to persecute that once was the note of the Church. The passion for nationality and for free institutions has taken the place of the reforming spirit in religion as a great impulse. On the whole, modern society has had as many martyrs as the sixteenth century witnessed. Tens of thousands of men died in America—before and after John Brown—to put down slavery, if we include, as is only fair, the many thousands who joined the great War of Liberation, as so many Harvard graduates did, not for pay, but because they believed firmly in the need of obliterating the great black stain of their continent. During the Austrian wars in Italy there were repeated cases of men who let themselves be shot down without firing in return, because their triumph would have been fatal to Hungary or Italy. At Magenta a whole regiment of Hungarians stood with folded arms to be mown down by the shot, only driving the enemy back if they charged with the bayonet, but refusing to win a victory for their German oppressors. At this moment hundreds of educated men are defying the whole power of the Russian Empire in the struggle for constitutional liberty. Every month sees a score or more of them consigned

to a hopeless dungeon or sent to Siberia, and the ranks close up again firmer after every fresh gap. Some of us cannot have forgotten how a crowd of Poles, men and women, knelt down in 1861 in the great square of Warsaw, praying and singing hymns, as fifteen volleys of grape shot tore through their ranks. The sacrifice was unavailing; but it is by sacrifices of this sort that national character is regenerated, and as long as the spirit of martyrdom lives, there seems no need to despair of the future of humanity.

The reply to pessimist arguments has proceeded, it will be observed, on the assumption that there is a tendency for the better in morals. What is terrible in the case for pessimism is the demonstration of seemingly solid grounds that wealth and invention are all capable of being applied to establishing the dominion of a single privileged caste, and are even likely to be so used. To most of us it would seem that if M. Renan's dream were true, and the millions were cowed into slavery by the scientific combinations of the future, the noblest man would be he who should force on that destruction of the earth and its inhabitants which science will make possible. Happily, we may dream that we are reserved for different times. Life, labour, womanly self-



respect, freedom of thought, have all conquered enlarged rights, while the very movements were going on which, in the opinion of pessimists, lead to bondage. Let it be granted that mechanical inventions are instruments in the hands of tyranny, and that railways and telegraphs by themselves are exceedingly poor substitutes for faith and freedom of thought. Even so, may we not reassure ourselves when we remember that behind all man's works are the indestructible human mind and moral sympathies. The will of the collective race is, after all, that which determines its fate, and the experience of past times shows that the race wills to be free rather than bond.

## VII.—PESSIMISM

THE tendency of popular thought at this time is certainly to be exultant and sanguine. There has been a long period of comparative peace in the world, accompanied by great industrial development. A great many countries have been colonised or opened to commerce within the remembrance of living men; and the result has been that legitimate fortunes have been enormously multiplied. What is more, the means of enjoying wealth have been almost indefinitely increased. Railways carry away the wealthy man from his surroundings to the moors of Scotland or the picture galleries of Italy, and a thousand trained caterers to the wants of luxury minister in every direction to the senses. With all this, there is a greater sense of security about the enjoyment of wealth. Wars of conquest are not common between civilised nations, and the predatory classes are kept well under control by the

strong hand of the law. Whether the hand-to-mouth workers of the community have profited to any appreciable extent by these changes is, of course, matter of controversy, but it is easy to show that many of them earn higher wages than they did, and buy a good many things cheaper. For them, too, progress has its comforts in the excursion train and the music hall, and its teachings in the cheap primary school, and its prospects of change for the better in the emigrant ship. Probably it is not too much to say that the general tendency of English statesmanship is to desire nothing more than that the present state of things should be carried to its highest development. It sees the millennium in more railroads and steamers, and telegraphs and factories, in unlimited free-trade, and invention stimulated to its utmost, and it perhaps conceives, not unreasonably, that there will be some mitigation of the toil exacted from the great mass of the community when organisation and discovery shall have said their last words.

Meanwhile, as is only natural, there are little eddies of thought in another direction. The doubt which the late Mr. Drummond expressed in the language of old-fashioned theology, whether peace without the coming of the Prince of Peace was

after all the highest good for weary men and women, has taken a more despondent form in the utterances of philosophers who are not sustained by Mr. Drummond's religious hopes. What underlies these doubts seems to be the observation that, after all, the world has not gone on steadily improving. It is questionable, for instance, if we understand art or philosophy better than they were understood in ancient Greece, or jurisprudence better than the legists of Rome; and even our theory of mechanics is not so much higher than the best theory of the ancient world, than is that theory higher than the best wisdom of the Middle Ages. We have carried agriculture to a point at which we can exhaust soils very rapidly; but in the art of keeping land permanently productive we are pretty much where the husbandmen of Italy have been for many centuries. What is more, there have been times, like the fifth and sixth centuries, when the burden of life has seemed intolerable to all but the coarsest natures, and times, like the sixteenth and seventeenth, when whole countries were desolated, and the work of civilisation undone. It is easy to say that there will be no fresh invasions of barbarians, because civilised races are in the ascendancy all the world over; and it is almost equally easy to believe that wars of religion will soon become

impossible, though the Franco-German war of 1870 was very like one. In the first place, savages and religious fanatics are not the only enemies of peace. In the next place, it is not altogether certain that either savages or fanatics have said their last word in the history of the world.

The peculiarity of the barbarians who broke up the Roman world was that they lived outside it, and were stronger than it, and lastly, which is the point least observed, that they offered the world something which seemed better than Imperial administration. Scholars have made us tolerably familiar with the fact that the Roman Empire at its greatest extent was very limited; that it comprised very little of Asia, and not much of Europe east of the Rhine or north of the Danube. At this moment a combination of the parts of Europe that were never really Roman against the parts that once were—of Germany, Austria, and Russia against Italy, France, Spain, Britain, and Turkey—would probably conquer half the countries attacked. No doubt Russia and Germany are stronger now than they have ever before been, but we must bear in mind that in the fourth and fifth centuries Germany undoubtedly drew thousands of recruits from the peasantry of the Roman provinces, who preferred anything to drudgery on the farms which absentee

and alien lords possessed. The so-called conquests of the Goths were, in fact, combined with a Jacquerie of the half-Latinised country population, who assisted in the sack of towns and the rout of armies, and afterwards went back, perhaps to their old farms, no longer as servants, but as owners under a lord. Side by side with this, we find a curious sterility in the dominant race; so that Romans are not numerous enough even to officer the armies that defend the empire. Large fortunes and habits of expense have killed out the patricians. The men are afraid to have children, lest they should not be able to live as their fathers lived; the women are ashamed of maternity. Now is it certain that the social features of the nineteenth century are altogether unlike this state of things? Can we not imagine a wealthy and privileged minority getting possession of power, and getting smaller every year, as a privileged class invariably does, till it is one day confronted in every country by a rising of the great masses whom it has brutalised by excessive toil and insufficient wages? Let us admit that in times of great industrial development, such as the last forty years have been, the more energetic among the working classes rise freely into the upper ranks, and recruit and strengthen them. But if we should have forty

years of industrial depression, would not these men look round them and count heads and hurl themselves against the whole fabric of society? Might we not, in fact, have the scenes of the last French Revolution renewed over half Europe? Such a revolt might even have more savagery about it than accompanied the barbarian conquests. The chiefs of the Goths were often men who admired and tried to preserve a great deal of the civilisation they saw—the grand public monuments and the churches. Would the insurgent artisan and agricultural labourer have any feeling for churches, or for the private palaces in which wealth is now concentrated?

M. Renan, in his *Philosophical Dialogues* suggests another solution of the problem of the future of humanity. He points out that the improvement of scientific arms tends to strengthen Governments against the masses; that "in future engines may be invented which, except in skilled hands, may be useless implements merely," and that "we can imagine a time when a group of men may by undisputed right reign over the rest of mankind." It is true M. Renan's theory is not very artistically worked out. He supposes the dominant class to "maintain in some lost district of Asia a nucleus of Bashkirs or Kalmuks, obedient machines un-

encumbered by moral scruples, and prepared for every sort of cruelty." He thinks that the terror inspired by such an organisation, and the impossibility of offering efficient resistance, would soon cause the very idea of revolt to disappear. It seems difficult to imagine the populations of France or England or Spain controlled by a few hundred men, because the rulers can summon an irresistible army of savage executioners by telegram. It is more natural to suppose that a few dozen fanatics like the Nihilists of Russia would destroy the dominant aristocracy by a well planned massacre, and that the savage hordes would be bought off or destroyed because the intelligence that guided them had perished. M. Renan, however, points to another possibility. "On the day when a few persons favoured of reason shall really possess the means of destroying this planet their supremacy will be established . . . because they will have in their hands the life of all." A clever American skit, which came out about twelve or thirteen years ago, represented a single man actually possessing himself of the secret how to set water on fire, and proceeding to extort ransom from the different communities of the world. In this case, as soon as he had convinced the people of San Francisco that he had a real secret to dispose of,



the committee appointed to investigate his proposals put him to death. Of course, if he had a dozen secret confederates the murder would have been useless. Even so, there remains the strong safeguard for society that men will not easily sacrifice their lives to revenge themselves because absolute power is withheld. Every man in a fortress who has access to the powder magazine might on this theory stipulate for a fortune if he abstained from blowing the whole works into the air. Practically, no one ever does it, and scarcely any man making the threat could convince those he addressed that he intended to carry it out.

Nevertheless, when we have pared off all that seems visionary or overstrained in M. Renan's anticipations, we must perhaps admit that something very like what he supposes might easily happen in any country. In Russia at this moment, for instance, 80,000,000 of people are absolutely controlled by a governing caste which only numbers a few thousand. The masses of the people are in the state M. Renan paints—too ignorant and too brutish to desire change, too timid to attempt to effect it. The Emperor is powerless in the hands of his Court. If he granted reforms, that would mean depriving almost everyone now privileged of position and wealth, his life would

not be worth a day's purchase. In this instance we see precisely how much and how little a highly organised revolt is able to accomplish. The nominal ruler is made miserable, and a brutal official is picked off now and again, but for every blow the revolutionists strike, scores of their own number are sent to Siberia, or are judicially murdered. It seems impossible that the enthusiasm which has sustained the movement so far can last very much longer. When it dies out Russia will be governed, not indeed by the wise people M. Renan dreams of, but by the shrewdest heads of the wealthy and educated class, who will probably carry on for years, till the corruption they have been compelled to tolerate becomes unendurable. Assume Germany to be the seat of the experiment, instead of Russia, and that in Germany the fear of Socialism and the dread of warlike neighbours induce the middle classes to entrust a really absolute power to the Executive. This supposition does not seem a very wild one, but it means the extinction of free institutions, the suppression of free thought, and all power lodged in the heads of departments and the ruling military coterie. Can it be doubted that we should gradually see a return to all the old order of things, because the old order of the world, from which modern

civilisation has been a departure, was distinctly aristocratic? The churches would be filled by order of police; the divine right of kings, and the secondary rights of the nobility, would again become dogmas; foreign trade would be discouraged and foreign emigration forbidden; labour would be regulated by law; and society would again crystalise into hard divisions of caste—of noble and priest, of soldier, artisan, and peasant. What the ancient world called hereditary caste the modern world will perhaps call subdivision of labour, but the results will be the same. The toiler will never emerge from his position, and will know that his children's children can only be toilers like himself. Gradually, indeed, they will be so far specialised that all intellectual capacity, except what is needed for their particular work—puddling or delving—will be atrophied.

M. Renan does not shrink from the most extreme consequence of his theories. "The majority," he says, "have to think and live by proxy. The idea which prevailed in the Middle Ages of people praying for those who have no time to pray is a very just one. The mass is devoted to labour: a few perform for them the high functions of life; this is humanity." On the other hand, those few are to be elaborated by processes now inconceiv-

able into beings so superior to average men and women, such "incarnations of the good and the true," that there will be joy in being subject to them. Apparently, they are to be above passion and incapable of love, so that it is a little hard to understand in what manner the sympathetic intelligence which seems necessary to a ruling caste will be developed. On the other hand, all their nervous force will be concentrated in the brain, and, as the man was developed from the animal, so from humanity will issue divinity. M. Renan, in fact, reverts to the old promise, "Ye shall be as gods," apparently in forgetfulness that it was made by the serpent, and that, six thousand years after it was made, man is not perceptibly more god-like than he was.

Mr. Greig's pessimism, it will be noted, foreshadowed the triumph of savagery over civilisation. M. Renan's pessimism, which he would probably call optimism, represents civilisation triumphing and maintaining the savagery of millions for its own benefit. "If some day, vivisection on a large scale became necessary in order to discover the profound secrets of animate life, I can imagine," he says, "creatures being crowned with flowers to offer themselves up in the ecstasy of voluntary martyrdom." In the same spirit he finds it con-

ceivable that millions of men should be ready to drudge and die, not that their children may be happier hereafter, but that their chiefs or their chiefs' children may ascend into a sublimated humanity. What will be inconceivable to most people with a moral sense, is that the future leaders of humanity should be willing to accept such a sacrifice, and should grow more god-like from its consummation.

1883

## VIII.—SHERIDAN <sup>1</sup>

### FIRST NOTICE

It is unfortunate that the subject of Sheridan should have been allotted to Mrs. Oliphant in so good a series as *English Men of Letters*. Mrs. Oliphant's exquisite literary taste and feeling for style carry her only a short way towards an estimate of the brilliant man who rivalled Fox and Burke in occasional bursts of oratory, had no superior in wit, and remains to this day our one writer of comedy since Congreve. A glance will show that a greater part of Mrs. Oliphant's biography is sheer bookmaking, a compilation, and not a very successful one, from Moore's life, from the *Reminiscences of an Octogenarian*, and from the notices left behind by Professor Smyth. Even,

<sup>1</sup> *Sheridan*, by Mrs. Oliphant. London: Macmillan & Co.

however, if Mrs. Oliphant had come to her task equipped with a genuine knowledge of Sheridan's life, instead of having to read it up as she wrote, it may be questioned whether she could have done justice to a difficult subject. Sheridan belongs to history quite as much as to literature; and while he has always had abundant justice meted out to him for the *Rivals*, the *Critic* and the *School for Scandal*, the true nature of his political standing—his real merits and his shortcomings—have never, we think, been adequately determined. Mrs. Oliphant's biography breaks down altogether after 1788, when Sheridan was still only thirty-seven. It is singularly meagre in all record of his wonderful conversational powers. It tells us nothing of his position in the House as one of the forlorn hopes of Liberalism during the times of the Revolution and of the French war. To crown all, it is perversely unjust to Sheridan's party, whom it accuses of having treated him badly, though it fails to show the real services which he had rendered, not only to England, but to the Whigs. For anything the reader is told, Sheridan may have spent the last twenty-eight years of his life in getting drunk and running into debt, and acting not very reputably at all times as the Prince of Wales's confidential adviser. There is no doubt

that Sheridan exposed himself to accusations of this kind, and it was all the more necessary that his latest biographer should vindicate his proper place for him.

The son of a struggling teacher in elocution, Richard Brinsley Sheridan first placed himself, when he was only twenty, by the romance of his marriage. He eloped with Miss Linley, the beauty of Bath, and an attractive singer, cutting out his elder brother Charles, and fighting a desperate duel with Captain Mathews, who had first tried to seduce Mrs. Sheridan, and afterwards had slandered her reputation. Then, settling in London later on, where they were formerly married, without a profession and with no means but three thousand pounds, which his wife happened to possess, Richard Sheridan loftily announced that he would not allow his wife to sing for pay. "It was questioned," says Boswell, "whether the young gentleman who had not a shilling in the world, but was blest with very uncommon talent, was not foolishly delicate or foolishly proud." Johnson, with all the high spirit of a Roman senator, exclaimed: "He resolved wisely and nobly, to be sure. He is a brave man. Would not a gentleman be disgraced by having his wife sing publicly for hire?" What is essential to observe is that



the conduct is typical of Sheridan throughout his career. He did many things that are incompatible with a high standard of self-respect; but he never lost sight of his personal dignity. He was capable of begging and borrowing money without much thought of repayment, but on his death-bed he sent back the cheque which the Prince Regent had forwarded out of respect for public opinion. He was not always severely scrupulous how he acted by party leaders when they had acted badly by him, but he never deserted his opinions when it was political and social ruin to be stanch to them. Accordingly, the men of his own day did him justice. They felt that Sheridan, though a needy man, who could not refuse office if it came to him in any honourable fashion, did not look upon it as the real object of his ambition, and would starve sooner than stoop. The taunt of "adventurer," which was freely, and we think justly, bestowed upon both Burke and Canning, was scarcely ever hurled at Sheridan, and never really attached to him. This man at least never lobbied for land grants in the West Indies, or tried to quarter himself on the pension list, or crossed the floor to sit with a triumphant majority. Neither was he unconscious of what he lost by the sacrifice. If he could have been, he

was sufficiently warned by the brutal candour with which young Canning apologised to him for ratting from Liberalism, because Liberalism had no prizes to bestow. The tears rose in the old man's eyes as he remarked to Byron how easy it was for rich noblemen to decline office and boast of their patriotism, and how much the struggle cost those who, with "equal pride, equal talents and not unequal passions," "knew not in the course of their lives what it was to have a shilling of their own."

We have said that though we regard Sheridan as a sufferer through his own magnificent integrity, we do not think the Whigs chargeable with having acted badly by him. There is no doubt, however, that they are accused of having steadily thrust him back on account of his want of birth and fortune. Sheridan, it is said, felt the treatment he received; Canning was driven into Toryism by the example; Lord Beaconsfield has repeated the charge with denunciations of the Venetian aristocracy; and now Mrs. Oliphant endorses it by observing reproachfully that the highest offices Burke and Sheridan could attain to were the subordinate posts of Paymaster of the Forces and Treasurer of the Navy. We cannot discuss Burke's case at length, but we

may observe that the post of Paymaster of the Forces was incomparably the most lucrative and the most coveted in England. The first Pitt and the first Fox held it; and the second Pitt and the second Fox were taunted by Rigby with desiring it for themselves. Neither was the place altogether an unimportant one, for Burke very nearly ruined the Rockingham Administration by his conduct in office. However, our immediate concern is not with Burke, but with Sheridan, a very much younger man, who came into Parliament fifteen years later, and who, like Burke, attached himself to the unpopular side. What, then, are the facts about Sheridan? Two years after he entered Parliament, being then only thirty-one years of age, having taken no prominent part in the American debates, and being only known in a general way as a brilliant and effective speaker, he was made an Under-Secretary of State in the Rockingham Administration. Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Goschen—the most conspicuous instances of early success among modern statesmen—were not higher placed than this at the same age. A year later Sheridan got another step, as Secretary of the Treasury in the famous Coalition Ministry. When that fell to pieces the Whigs were hopelessly routed, and the breaking out of the French

Revolution completely disintegrated and destroyed them as a party. For a moment in 1789 it seemed as if the Prince of Wales would be Regent, and would summon a Liberal Ministry to the head of affairs. It is said that on this occasion the post of Treasurer of the Navy was intended for Sheridan; and whatever reproach of ingratitude attaches to the Whigs, or was brought by young Canning, must have reference to this. It is noticeable, however, that Moore represents Sheridan as considering the prospect of such an appointment with satisfaction and hope; and as he was at that time at the very height of his reputation, and on the most cordial terms with Fox and the Prince of Wales, it is difficult to suppose that his wishes were not consulted, though the post may not have been precisely that which he would have chosen. Seventeen years later, in 1806, we believe, he accepted this same office with reluctance. Then it was, no doubt, a humiliation to take it, for the acceptance of a subordinate post implied that he did not expect to succeed Fox as leader, whereas in 1789 there could be no thought of succeeding Fox or of rising over Burke's head. But it must be borne in mind that an English Cabinet a century ago commonly contained only nine or ten mem-

bers; that the Peers habitually monopolised the larger half; and that both in 1789 and in 1806 Fox had to concede to a coalition. In 1806 the pure Whigs, with whom Sheridan had connected himself, were only a fraction of a small Cabinet, and the Whig seceders—such as Lord Grenville and Mr. Wyndham—who composed the real strength of the administration, were men whom Sheridan had constantly attacked, and whom he disliked more heartily than he disliked Pitt. Therefore, while we are far from denying that each party gives the highest price for what it is most in need of—the Whigs for rank and the Tories for talent—we are not prepared to admit that Sheridan had exceptional causes of complaint. He was singularly lucky at first, and got a little less than his due later on. Comparing himself with Jenkinson and Addington, he might murmur at Whig exclusiveness, but the fortunes of Canning for thirty years were scarcely more brilliant than his own, though Canning seemed to have every chance in his favour. A preference for slow, safe men over men of brilliant originality is not confined to a single party in the English Parliament.

Neither can we consent to regard Sheridan as a statesman of the peculiar ability which the leader-

ship of a party demands. In his curiously compounded nature high personal honour and patriotic instincts were mixed with a general carelessness for abstract principle. The Liberal watch-words of the day, after the American war, were electoral reform, Catholic emancipation, non-intervention on the continent, and constitutional government at home. On none of these subjects does Sheridan seem to have had a mature opinion. It suited his genius to trust to the inspiration of the emergency. Give him his brief, and he would speak to it; would coach up finance for three weeks in order to demolish Mr. Pitt, or would go down in the country for three days to prepare a speech for the impeachment of Warren Hastings. Naturally, Sheridan's success was greatest where his audience were least able to check him. His two most famous efforts undoubtedly were the speech for bringing Hastings to trial and the famous Begum speech. In cases of this sort he could draw liberally upon his fancy. When he came to the French Revolution or the state of Ireland, he was nothing more than an impassioned advocate, trying to turn the arguments used in debate against the Tory speakers who had employed them. Burke's diatribes against the French Revolution, however exaggerated they may be, are

the work of a man who understood thoroughly from history what revolutions are, and who was following the course of this one with the acutest scrutiny. They are better history to this day than Carlyle or Michelet. Sheridan simply catches at generalities, at the facts as he finds them stated in journals or in debate, to show that they will admit of a different rendering. He could always command an audience—because he was always witty and eloquent—but he never really contributed to stem the tide of opinion. Even his speeches were on a faulty model. It was his singular good fortune to enter the House at a time when the minds of men were highly strung, and when there was great superficial culture among members; when allusions to a passage of the *Iliad* or the *Æneid* that seem very commonplace now sent a thrill of delight through the Senate. Sheridan had some advantages over all his rivals. He had more good taste and temper than Burke, more epigram than Fox, and a subtler feeling for rhetoric than any other member of Parliament. His comparison of the Premier clinging to the Treasury bench, with Theseus, who had so grown to his rock that he could only be pulled away with the loss of part of his flesh, is one of the happiest hits of the time; and we need not quarrel with

him for borrowing it from a pamphlet in which it was hopelessly buried. The man who silenced Rigby and Pitt by mere wit was something more than an ordinary debater. So long as Sheridan trusted to wit he was safe. When he attempted the higher eloquence he became declamatory and tawdry and unreal. The interval between his great orations and the fustian of such a play as *Pizarro* is so slight as to be scarcely measurable. Not a passage or thought of Sheridan's more laboured orations lingers in the memory. The friends who fell on his neck after his Begum speech, who trumpeted his praises, and who were honestly proud of his alliance, never trusted him to lead the attack on any great emergency in the House.

Sheridan's intellectual deficiencies might have been redeemed by the brilliancy of his genius and the charm of his personal popularity; but his moral foibles inclined the balance again. It may seem strange to say that a man who was admirable in all family relations, who never gamed, and was never charged with irreligion, did yet fall below the level of his contemporaries; and men who remember what Sir Francis Dashwood and Lord Sandwich and the first Lord Holland and Rigby and Wilkes had been, and what Sheridan's



leader, Charles Fox, was, will be disposed to doubt the justice of the charge. It must be remembered, however, that Sheridan came into politics just as a great moral revival was sweeping across the country. The American war and the calamities it entailed shocked the nation into earnestness. The Wesleyan movement and the Evangelical revival gave a religious direction to public sentiment, and the French Revolution completed the transformation. To disbelieve in God was supposed to be the first step on the road to the guillotine. The section of the Liberals with which Sheridan associated himself was audaciously and wittily profligate. When they wished to demolish Mr. Pitt, the Whig wits attacked him, in verse and prose that cannot be read, for not getting drunk, and for being commonly respectable, and exploded in Homeric laughter at "the sober, the chaste, the virtuous, the edifying manner in which the immaculate young man passed the recess from public business, not in riot and debauchery, not in gaming, not in attendance on ladies, either modest or immodest, but in drinking tea with Mr. Steel at the Castle in Brighthelmstone." Ten years later a warm admirer of Sheridan's genius, Mathias, declared in vigorous verse that the Duke of Portland, as leader of the Whigs, was well

justified in refusing to admit so immoral a man as the author of the *School for Scandal* into a Cabinet. Sheridan's faults were, in fact, thrown into terrible relief by the fierce light of the torch he had himself kindled. To the English public of later days—that public which venerated Wilberforce for being good, and liked to see Mr. Percival leading his family to the parish church—Sheridan was little more than a battered and bloated Charles Surface, the apologist of extravagance and seduction, the artist who had represented outspoken vice triumphing over conventional hypocrisy. Neither was it possible for the world at large not to regard Sheridan, the bosom friend of the Prince of Wales, as contaminated by the deep infamy of the Heir Apparent's private life. Some of the graver charges against the Prince are now almost forgotten. It is not remembered that he borrowed money from the infamous Duke of Orleans, and was regarded as his pensioner; or that he procured an order exiling other emigrants to whom he was inconveniently indebted, and who were compelled to return to France, where they perished on the scaffold. Putting this aside, we cannot forget that Sheridan was employed by the Prince to explain away the false denials of the marriage with Mrs. Fitzherbert, which Fox had

been entrapped into making, and which no honourable man ought to have connected himself with except to disclaim. For something like twenty years Sheridan was the confidential adviser of the Prince, who associated with him in his orgies, drafted his State papers, took part with him, on one occasion at least, against the Whig leaders, and on another occasion procured the failure of negotiations which would have restored the Whig party to power. Is it wonderful if his party resented his conduct, or if society regarded Sheridan as responsible in many cases where he was perfectly innocent? An army of Wilberforces could not have kept the heir to the Crown from low vice or from behaving badly to his wife, but where even Fox withdrew from intimacy, it was not wise for Sheridan to be a bosom friend. When it was a question between place and principle, Sheridan could be firm; but he was not proof against the seductions of royal intimacy and companionship with the first gentlemen of the day. He himself must have blushed when he wrote at his patron's command to entreat Fox not to present a petition in support of Catholic emancipation. "I could not be dissuaded," Fox replied, "from doing the public act which of all others it will give me the greatest satisfaction and pride to perform."

We have tried to show why Sheridan's success in political life was below the real measure of his intellectual powers. We hope in our next notice to show what his indisputable claims to rank as one of the worthies of England are.

## IX—SHERIDAN<sup>1</sup>

### SECOND NOTICE

IN estimating Sheridan's career as a public man—a career which extended over nearly thirty years—we must take into account that he was never member of a Cabinet and never leader of a party. It is perhaps fortunate for his fame that he was never charged with the severer duties of administration. It is difficult to believe that a man whose private life was conspicuous for the want of all businesslike qualities—except the capacity to obtain advances without security, from unwary financiers—could have done the heavy work of a department of State in critical times. During the few months Sheridan was in office as Secretary of the Treasury under the Coalition Ministry, the wags of the day stuck a notice on his official door—"No applications can be received

<sup>1</sup>*Sheridan*, by Mrs. Oliphant. London: Macmillan & Co.

here on Sundays, nor any business done during the remainder of the week." Probably Sheridan was condemned beforehand in this respect, from his reputation for carelessness as manager of Drury-Lane Theatre, but there is evidence that in later life, when he held a quasi-Ministerial post under the Prince of Wales, as Receiver of the Duchy of Cornwall, he treated its business precisely as he treated his own. We cannot disregard these traits of character when we have to estimate Sheridan's claims to the coveted leadership of Whigs. The accredited leader of a party is the man whom that party is bound in honour, if it can, to make Premier; and a Premier of England, even in quiet times, much more in times of general war and embarrassment, ought to be a man with a capacity for dogged hard work. Fox, gambler as he was into middle life and hard drinker as he was to the last, was a man of incessant and restless application; while Sheridan put all the work he did into elaborating his powers of style, and affected to owe even his oratory to inspiration. Putting aside all claims of party loyalty, we may surely say that Sheridan was not fitted to be a leader. There remains, however, a third position, which men of the highest capacity have often been contented to fill in the English Parliament—

that of independent member in its best sense. What Wilberforce was all his life, what Romilly, Lord Grey and Brougham were for the greater part of their political careers, Sheridan was also fated to be; not because he did not desire office if he could achieve it honourably, but because he valued his own self-respect too highly to stoop to the compliances that might have lifted him into power. What we have to ask about such a man is, whether the counsels he gave to his own party and the attitude he took up towards hostile Governments are such as the maturest criticism can approve.

While the Rockingham Ministry held office, the question of acknowledging the right of Ireland to legislate for itself, came up. Sheridan fearlessly declared that an English Parliament in which Ireland was not represented, had no right to override the Irish legislature. The next important act we know of in connection with his public life is that he earnestly warned Fox against the disastrous coalition with Lord North, whose policy the Whigs had strongly condemned. The advice was eminently sound. Public morality would not have been shocked if it had been followed, and the Whig party would not have been wrecked. It will be remembered that the

Coalition Ministry was wrecked on the famous India Bill, drafted by Burke, which embodied the sound principle of transferring the supervision of Indian rule to the Crown, and the faulty principle of transferring Indian patronage to the Whig party. We may surely set it down to Sheridan's good sense that he abstained from committing himself to this measure, and only spoke on the third reading, when he bantered some of the orators who had denounced it in Biblical language, and proved out of the Apocalypse that the Whig commissioners, instead of being the seven heads of the beast, were "seven angels, clothed in pure and white linen." Later on the Whig party reverted to their attack on the system of governing a distant empire by a commercial company, and practically changed the whole tenor of English policy by the historical impeachment of Warren Hastings. Then, when there were no side issues of party patronage, Sheridan shared the honours of the contest with Burke, eclipsing him in the first speech in Parliament, when Pitt was compelled to allow a trial to take place, and rivalling him, in the estimation of the time, by the famous Begum oration in Westminster Hall. With 1789 came the French Revolution, and within a few months Burke's



apostasy, followed by the defection of the great majority of the Whigs. "It has been asserted," Mr. Byng used to say, "that the Whigs could all have been held in one hackney coach. This is a calumny. We should have filled two." Side by side with Fox and Erskine, Fitzpatrick and Tierney, Sheridan held his own in the most gallant struggle against numbers and Court influence and public opinion that the walls of the House of Commons have ever witnessed. Far from us to join in the charges of that day against Burke, that he was corrupt, or in the judgment Mr. Buckle has formulated, that he was insane. We believe he was in age what he had been in youth—a man of great imaginative power and unrivalled learning; but wanting balance, headstrong, and a constitutional pedant. His predictions that France would break up into a knot of federated republics, his declaration that it was almost blotted out from the political map of Europe, are ridiculous in the light of history. Unhappily his advocacy of a merciless crusade against the republic, his abuse of all republicans, from Lafayette, whom he styled a horrid ruffian, to the French people, whom he called murderous atheists and prostitute outcasts, appealed to old passions and to present apprehensions. Burke

was the eloquent mouthpiece of king and people. All the greater is the undying debt of gratitude we owe to the noble little knot of statesmen who, without palliating the excesses of French mobs, could understand that the country was in the throes of a new birth. Nevertheless, while Sheridan was exposing himself to the worst obloquy—while Gillray was caricaturing him as practising shots at the effigy of King George, or as assisting to try Pitt for his life while Magna Charta and the Bible were being burned, the Whig patriot was able to show on occasion that he would not serve his party against the State. When the mutiny at the Nore broke out in 1797 there were Whigs who wished to seize the moment and embarrass the Ministry. Sheridan came forward and threw his weight into the balance. "Shall we yield," he said, "to mutinous sailors? Never; for in one moment we should extinguish three centuries of glory." There is another story of his conduct on this occasion which shows the man. He went to Mr. Dundas, and said: "My advice is that you cut the buoys on the river, send Sir Charles Grey down to the coast, and set a price on Parker's head. If the Administration take this advice instantly they will save the country; if not they will lose it; and on their refusal, I will impeach them

in the House of Commons this very evening."

Let it be borne in mind that at this time Sheridan was the real representative of the Whig party, as Fox and his friends had seceded from Parliament in disgust, and the importance of Sheridan's adhesion to Government may be estimated. He pursued the same policy as regarded measures of war. He had steadily opposed the wicked crusade which George III and Pitt stimulated against the French republic; he was never remiss in stimulating the resistance to Napoleon's wars of aggression. Almost his last recorded utterance in Parliament was to advocate aid to Spain on the largest scale, and it is noticeable that on this occasion he singled out his old adversaries, Wyndham and Burke, for special eulogy. The only practical recognition of Sheridan's patriotism in these matters came in 1809 from the undergraduates of Oxford. At Lord Grenville's installation as Chancellor in 1809 Sheridan's name was not included among the recipients of honorary degrees, through the opposition of two masters of arts, one of whom was the son of a clergyman who found it impossible to collect tithes from the impecunious statesman. Sheridan attended the ceremony as a private guest. But as soon as he was seen in the theatre a shout arose, "Sheridan among the Doctors; Sheridan

among the doctors!" and order could not be restored till he had taken his seat among the honorary graduates. This time, at least, the generous fervour of young men redeemed the baseness of their seniors; and Sheridan, it is said, counted his reception that day among the highest honours of his life.

Sheridan's reputation as a dramatist still labours under the damaging criticism of Macaulay, which is reproduced by every successive biographer. Macaulay objected that Sheridan, like Congreve, made all his characters in his own likeness. "Outlines and tints are forgotten in the common blaze, which illuminates all." "Every fop, every boor, every valet is a man of wit." "The very butts and dupes outshine the whole Hotel of Rambouillet." Not for us to dispute the substantial justice of Macaulay's verdict, but we may be allowed to demur to its complete adequacy, and to point out that Macaulay himself has supplied the corrective when he contrasts the "indiscriminate prodigality" of Sheridan with the exquisite judgment of Shakespeare, who made Bardolph and Shallow distinct in individuality from Falstaff. We are not among those who hold that any writer—certainly not any Englishman of the last two centuries—can be compared to Shakespeare. Shakespeare stands by

himself, unapproachable. If, however, a comparison is instituted, it is clear that it ought to be between works of the same description. It is unfair to compare the comedy of manners, in which Sheridan was a master, with the wider and deeper comedy of character, in which Shakespeare found his appropriate field. Such a play as the *Merchant of Venice* deals with the very springs of human emotion, with friendship in Antonio, and love in Jessica, with moody, passionate revenge in Shylock, with chivalrous idealism in Bassanio, and with meditative insight in Portia. Sheridan is only concerned to catch the humours and the fashions of society during a season or a generation. It has been said, with great truth, of Mr. Trollope, that he described his men and women with such photographic accuracy that his books had a flavour of obsolescence after they had been published two or three years. The talk of his heroes and heroines was already a little antiquated by the time their fashions in dress would naturally have changed. Whoever ridicules what is fleeting and whimsical in life must discount his chances of immediate effect by a prospect of rapid oblivion. As it happens, there is one play of Shakespeare's which is a comedy of manners. *Love's Labour Lost*, as Mr. Dowden puts it, is a "satirical extravaganza

embodying Shakespeare's criticism upon contemporary fashions and foibles in speech, in manners, and in literature." Now, if we examine this play, we shall find it a coruscation of bright pleasantries from beginning to end. Not only the King and Biron and Boyet and the princess and her ladies can cap repartees, but the fantastical Adriano and his page and Costard and Jaquenetta are all infected with wit. No doubt there are foils in the persons of Holofernes and Dull, but even Dull is the exquisite original of Dogberry and Mrs. Malaprop. In short, when he handled the same matter as Sheridan, Shakespeare handled it on the same lines. No doubt Shakespeare is incomparably superior to Sheridan's best work in plot and surrounding. The conception of the King and his knights who have withdrawn from the world to study, and who are disconcerted by a vision of fair women, because they have not been able to divorce themselves from the instincts of human nature, is the original of Tennyson's Princess, and is incomparably more natural and better sustained. On the other hand, Sheridan partly retrieves his incoherent plots by the great vivacity of his action, and has the advantage of being more intelligible to a later generation.

We may add to this another consideration,

The eighteenth century was the French century all the world over, and England felt the influence of French taste in the daily intercourse of society. Never was there such a mob of gentlemen who conversed with ease as between the times of Queen Anne and the French Revolution. For a man to be able to talk epigrammatically or poignantly was a virtue that covered a multitude of sins. Johnson, with his overbearing tone and gross habits, would hardly be admitted to a public dinner in these days. His contemporaries courted and deferred to him, and for his sake tolerated the butt on whom he expended his wit. Johnson himself, with all his prejudices and intolerance, could not resist the fascinations of Foote and Wilkes. Garrick, a player when players were thought infamous, was asked everywhere because he could talk. Burke retrieved the failures of his ponderous speeches by his brilliancy at the dinner-table. "If Burke," said Johnson, "should go into a stable to see his horse dressed, the ostler would say: 'We have had an extraordinary man here.'"

Horace Walpole's letters, which give the gossip of the day, are a perfect repertory of good sayings and piquant anecdotes. Sheridan lived in the best set of all; the set which included Fox and Burke, Fitz-

patrick and Hare, Tickle and Lord John Townsend; the set which objected to Dr. Johnson as too coarse, and to George Selwyn as not spontaneous. It was scarcely possible for Sheridan to describe a world that should seem natural to himself and to make it dull. Spending his days in the green room, in the House of Commons, or at the Club, or at Carlton House, and his evenings in the best houses, he found everywhere a universal sparkle of wit. There was tinsel as well as gold in the current coin of light talk; but such as it was, everyone had his share, and it all glittered under the lights. The *School for Scandal* reflects this brilliant society in a way that is often laboured and artificial, but that is very charming at times. All are witty, because wit, or something that did duty for wit, came naturally to everyone in those days; and it is, we think, true that in many cases we should scarcely know who was speaking if we shut our eyes. Even this criticism, however, has been carried too far. Lady Teazle throughout is the high-spirited vivacious woman who talks scandal in lightness of heart, goes to the brink of ruin for the fun of flirting, and is at her best when she is teasing her husband. Sir Peter is equally thorough in his way. He is a merchant of the



old school, with the habit of good society, honourable and generous, but without the masculine fibre. The scene in which Charles Surface banters his uncle and Lady Teazle under circumstances where common good taste would prescribe silence is simply revolting to the modern reader, but is, we believe, thoroughly true to the fashionable life of that day. Where Sheridan broke down hopelessly was in sketching a villain. Joseph Surface is a medley of inconsistent motives, incompatible vices and incongruous phrases. He entangles himself in an intrigue without wishing and without needing it; is precipitate and sordid; epigrammatic and canting. Sheridan's failure in this instance marks the precise boundary line of his powers. He detected the foible of mind and the trick of phrase in an instant; but he had no knowledge of the heart.

What Sheridan himself was in private companionship will, we fear, never be known but by vague report. He lacks a Boswell. In the absence of definite record of his conversations let us hazard a belief that he owed more to a spontaneous charm of happy phrase and suggestiveness, than to any such power of finished epigram as he evidently affected in his comedies. The reply to Mrs. Cholmondeley when she asked for an

acrostic on her name, "It would be so long that I should have to divide it into cantos"; the retort when Rogers suggested to him that he should make love to the majestic Mrs. Siddons, "I could as soon make love to the Archbishop of Canterbury;" the pleasantry on Rose when he christened his son William Pitt, "a rose by any other name would smell as sweet," are all of a kind which scarcely bear to be embalmed. It is remarkable indeed that a man who touched and retouched his comedies with such extreme care was particularly successful in what must have been impromptus. His proposal to accommodate the highwayman who stopped him with a bill, and his offer on another similar occasion of an empty purse with the hope that the ruffian would let him go halves in whatever was found inside, are instances of the ruling humour under difficulties. The story how he hiccupped the name of "Wilberforce" when he was picked out of the gutter and asked his address, is too good to be easily forgotten. Not less happy was his rejoinder when a friend asked him, "Sheridan, how could you have the audacity to praise the *luminous* pages of so obscure a writer as Gibbon?" "I said *voluminous*, my dear fellow." All these are the overflowings of a rich mind. Sheridan, however,

was very far from being a mere humorist. He had the fondness of his time for classical study, and once combined with Wyndham to establish a society for reviving the sports of the ancients. His criticism of Dr. Johnson in the longest recorded passage of his *Table Talk* is a good antidote to Carlyle's raptures, and will bear partial quotation:—"I admire him for his learning, for his patient and enduring industry, but he was a timeserver void of principle. He would bow to my lord and give a kick to a beggar; take tea with Mrs. Thrale and get drunk at the Mitre or the Ship; then staggering home to his lodgings, piously enter into confession, write down his own absolution in the form of a new prayer suitable for all occasions, and being so whitewashed prepare himself for all adventures on the morrow."

It is a small but curious proof of the careless manner in which Mrs. Oliphant has compiled Sheridan's life, that she omits to give the name of his mother, a woman of real ability and writer of one of the best novels of the day. The fact is that Moore, probably from forgetfulness, has not mentioned the maiden name, and every account of Sheridan that has been published since Moore's life seems to be drawn from him. Mrs. Sheridan was a Miss Chamberlayne, of Dublin, the grand-

daughter of a Sir Oliver Chamberlayne, who probably belonged to the well known West Country family. The way in which Sheridan got possession of Drury-Lane is absurdly mystified. There can be little doubt that Garrick was alarmed by the successes of Covent Garden, and sold out to Sheridan upon easy terms, allowing Sheridan's part of the purchase money to remain on mortgage. The political part of Sheridan's life has been even more wretchedly slurred over. The unworthy assistance he rendered to the Prince of Wales in the matter of Mrs. Fitzherbert, and his treachery in concealing the fact that the Tory officers of the Royal household were willing to resign in 1812 if a Whig Ministry was formed, are not so much as alluded to. Mr. Rae's short sketch, though far from adequate, is incomparably more life-like and real, and has the merit of doing substantial justice to the orator and the statesman. Meanwhile, a real estimate of Sheridan, especially from the literary point of view, is a work that remains to be done.

1884

## X.—BISMARCK<sup>1</sup>

DR. BUSCH, a Prussian publicist, who in 1870 was attached to Bismarck for the purpose apparently of writing inspired newspaper articles, and who in 1877 published a sort of journal of his experiences under the title of Bismarck in the Franco-German war, has just produced a study of Bismarck's career. Apart from the special qualification of having lived on terms of familiar intercourse with his hero, Dr. Busch possesses the further advantage of being absolutely uncritical in his admiration. So far as we can conjecture nothing cynical or brutal has been suppressed, because it has never even occurred to Dr. Busch that the speeches and opinions of a supremely successful man can be anything but admirable.

<sup>1</sup> *Our Chancellor: Sketches from a Historical Picture.* By Moritz Busch; translated by William Beatty-Kingston. London: Macmillan & Co.

If there be an exception to this indiscriminate worship, it is probably to be found in the chapter which deals with Prince Bismarck's religious ideas, which we suspect are more of the old orthodox type than Dr. Busch in his heart approves. "Even the greatest intelligences," he remarks disconsolately, "are susceptible to something besides religious belief that enlightened people are accustomed to designate as superstition." In his present volumes Dr. Busch deals chiefly with Bismarck's early career and with the last twelve years of his life, and only dwells briefly upon the incidents of the great war with France, by which Bismarck is chiefly known outside Germany. Naturally, too, in his present volumes he speaks more of the statesman than of the man, and gives rather a philosophical *résumé* than a narrative of his career. We shall therefore press the earlier work into our service to justify the estimate which Dr. Busch has enabled us to form of the greatest living German; the man who has done more than any one besides, to remodel the map of Europe and redistribute the balance of power.

By birth and education Otto von Bismarck is essentially a Prussian country gentleman of the old school, which retained the arrogance of feudal times, and the roughness that incessant wars and

life in camps engender, but united to all this a sentiment of discipline which it was Frederick II's greatest wish to implant. Bismarck derives from nature a superabundant vitality, which, when he was a young man, found expression in violent physical exercise, in the rough horse-play of practical jokes, and in an overbearing contempt for the forms of society. Such a man but for his magnificent brain might have been nothing better than a brutal country squire or a rough colonel of dragoons. Although, however, Bismarck for a long time belonged to what was known as the Junker party—the party of extreme and irrational Conservatism—it is evident that his real starting point in politics was something very different from mere feudalism. Indeed, if we were to search for historical parallels to him, the names of Luther and Cromwell are those that would most readily occur. He has been all his life a German anxious for German unity; a Prussian desirous to procure Prussia's ascendancy; unswervingly loyal to his King; a man of deep seated religious convictions, though not of devotional habits; and, strange as it may appear, a Constitutionalist. The meaning of this last word must not be misunderstood. Bismarck, though he goes so far as to call himself a Parliamentary, and

thoroughly holds the English doctrine that supplies can only be obtained by vote of the representatives of the people, is not a man that would sacrifice the substance of good government to the form, the power of vigorous action to the right of speaking against time. He is, however, constitutional in the best sense of considering that royal authority is limited on every side by law; and that even if it be sometimes necessary to overstep technical forms, the transgressor is bound to apply afterwards to Parliament for an act of indemnity. That Bismarck was regarded for years as a mere reactionary is due to the fact that he was in violent opposition to the Liberalism of 1848, which aimed at the incompatible objects of weakening the royal authority, reducing the army and the taxation, and promoting German unity. Bismarck felt the contempt of a clever man for these aspirations after a chaos brooded over by the spirit of philosophy. When a Democratic deputy, d'Ester, one day proposed jestingly to him that whichever got the upper hand should protect the other, Bismarck answered, "Should your party prove victorious, life will not be worth having for me; if we get the upper hand, hanging will be the order of the day, but with politeness, even to the very last gallows bird."



For several years Bismarck was a diplomatist, first at Frankfort and afterwards at St. Petersburg. At Frankfort, where he had to maintain the position of Prussia in the days of her deepest degradation, against Austrian arrogance, Bismarck allowed himself a savage licence of tone. "I remember once," he told Dr. Busch "at a large party, that reference was made to some Austrian statement which was not in accordance with facts. Raising his voice so that I might hear him, the Austrian envoy exclaimed, 'Well, if that is not true, I must have lied in the name of the Imperial Royal Government,' and then he looked at me. I returned his gaze, and said, carelessly, 'Quite so, your Excellency.'" The upshot was that Prokesch agreed to make the alterations Bismarck had demanded. On the other hand, when he was envoy at St. Petersburg Bismarck produced a very favourable impression, and went so far in his anxiety to please as thoroughly to master the difficult Russian language. Among his contemporaries one remarkable person failed altogether to understand him. "He is not a man of real weight" (*un homme sérieux*), was Louis Napoleon's verdict after one of their interviews. Although Napoleon III's ability has been very much over-rated, he was no fool, and must have contracted

some insight into character from the mere habit of meeting clever men. There can be no doubt that he thoroughly appreciated Cavour. What we must probably assume is that Cavour's plans for Italian unity did not appear irrational to him, because he had been a Carbonaro, and understood the intensity of Italian feeling, but that Bismarck's pretensions on behalf of Prussia seemed extravagant, and irrational, because the Emperor, down to the day when his troops were beaten in Wörth, never understood Prussia or Germany. Neither was he singular in this. Every map published in London in the beginning of that campaign was a map which assumed that the French were marching upon Berlin.

The first great success Bismarck achieved was the crushing defeat of Austria in the war of 1866, known popularly as the Brothers' War. If we assume, as surely we must, that a people who had suffered so much from disunion as the Germans, were justified in attaching supreme importance to unity, we have only to consider whether Bismarck might have attained his object by quiet and peaceable means. With respect to this Dr. Busch gives a statement which is derived from Bismarck himself, and which if it be true, as seems not unlikely, ought to be conclusive. Bismarck says

that while peace was still possible he proposed to Austria that the two countries should divide the leadership of Germany between them, and unite their forces against France to conquer Alsace and make Strasburg a federal fortress. The Emperor of Austria seemed not disinclined to the proposal, but referred it to his Ministers, and they, believing Prussia would be beaten, rejected it, with the idea that when Austria's supremacy was established they might then enter into the league against France. The blame of the war in Germany would seem, therefore, to rest upon Austria. Bismarck further claims the merit of having saved Austria from any cession of territory, and spared Saxony, her principal ally, in order that the peace might be speedily concluded, and might be durable. This was in direct opposition to the military party, and there can be little doubt that it has been justified by events. We do not suppose indeed that Austria's neutrality during the war with France was due to any gratitude for the leniency with which she had been treated or to any feeling but fear. At that time the wound was too recent to have closed. On the other hand, it is almost certain that the present intimate alliance between North Germany and Austria could not have been formed if Prussia

was in military occupation of an Austrian Alsace.

It is clear from Bismarck's proposal to Austria that he was then (1866) meditating and prepared for a war of wanton aggression upon France. It was not his interest, however, to begin this immediately after Sadowa, while Germany was still unsettled, and the German army only half organised, so for about four years he allowed the French court to amuse itself with projects by which France and Prussia were to seize and divide neutral territory. Thus it was that when the final breach came Bismarck was able to startle the world with revelations of unscrupulous French ambition, that went far towards isolating Louis Napoleon from his natural allies. Dr. Busch does not inform us how far Bismarck was responsible for Prince Frederic of Hohenzollern's acceptance of the Spanish crown in June, 1870, after he had declined it in 1869. What he does admit is that it was Bismarck who drew up the famous telegram which represented the King of Prussia as refusing to receive the French ambassador in such a way that the feeling for war in France rose to a height in which the Government, had it been so minded, could hardly have kept it down. The proffered mediation of England was now rejected peremptorily by both countries.

Grammont pleaded that Bismarck's telegram was an unpardonable insult, and Bismarck—surely with less reason—declared that if negotiations were to be renewed the French Government must take the initiative. It is difficult to resist the impression that if Bismarck had been half as anxious to avoid war as he was to bring it about, the friendly relations of the two countries would never have been disturbed. Putting aside all questions as to the horrible wickedness of causing a great war that might be averted, we may surely say that in the present state of society the highest statesmanship will rather wait for opportunities than try to create them. Public opinion has not hindered the German armies from forcing Paris to capitulate, or from seizing and retaining a large portion of French territory, but the feeling with which Germany is now watched is one of vigilant suspicion. No one thinks that the war of 1870 was a simple war of defence, or was not carefully planned beforehand and led up to; and no people at this moment feels sure that the next thunder cloud may not burst over its own head.

The world has done such ample justice to the signal ability with which the operations of the German forces were carried on, that it only seems

necessary to indicate two or three points with reference to Bismarck's character. One is that the work of organising the Prussian army was entirely carried out under his administration. At the time of Solferino, the Prussian army, if it had taken the field to help Austria, would probably have been defeated in every engagement. Bismarck himself told Dr. Busch that if they had gone to war in 1867 it was a question whether the French would not have been in Berlin. Of course the credit of making technical changes belongs to the military administrators, Von Moltke and Von Roon, and it was the King who designated and supported these men; but even so, they could hardly have done what they did if Bismarck had not co-operated with them intelligently, and understood with rare precision precisely how far he could use them. The next point, which it is impossible to pass over, is that Bismarck seems to have been the hardest and most pitiless of the men in power during the war. Dr Busch's journal gives repeated instances of the way in which he talked during the campaign. "4th October.—'The idea of letting those treacherous Franc-Tireurs off! There is criminal negligence in not taking them out and shooting them. All villages where treachery is practised should be

at once burned down, and all the male inhabitants hanged.' On the 1st November the Chief said, 'Prisoners! That they should ever take Franc-Tireurs prisoners! They ought to have shot them down by files.' 29th November.—About five hundred red breeches were taken prisoners. The Chief complained bitterly that they would go on taking prisoners instead of shooting them down at once. 1st December.—'If our troops had only burned down Châtillon in their first rage. Afterwards, in cold blood, it is not so easy to do.' 26th January.—When Arnim told us that a great many prisoners (from Bourbaki's army) had been again taken, he (Bismarck) remarked, 'This does not please me. What are we to come to at last with them all? Why do they make so many prisoners?'" In short, Bismarck would have liked the war to be one in which no quarter was given, not only to irregulars, whom, even when they are in uniform, soldiers view with a justifiable dislike, but to soldiers of the line, beaten and surrendering. In the last case quoted the troops referred to are Bourbaki's men, raw recruits, who were mown down almost unresistingly by the German grape shot, while thousands died of privations and cold. Bismarck seems to have thought it hard that any should escape. The

savagery of tone seems rather that of a wild beast than of a man. Neither was he very tender of Germans when they stood in his way. "During the historical summer night (1866) when General Manteuffel was about to cross the Elbe and enter the Guelphic kingdom, Bismarck telegraphed to him, 'Treat them as fellow countrymen; homicidally if necessary!'"

During the last thirteen years, though Bismarck's foreign policy has been watched with the greatest interest by every foreign power, there has been no critical episode like a war to test it. That he should have been able to maintain peace, though the German treasury is rich and the army confident of its powers, and that Germany should at this moment be apparently stronger and more secure than ever, are incontestable evidences of his ability. The attention of the world has, however, been even more fixed upon his internal than his foreign policy. The war of 1870 was understood all over the continent as a struggle between Catholicism and Free Thought. Its results have been that the Italians have occupied Rome, that the priests are almost powerless in France, and that education is being secularised everywhere. Nowhere has the battle of enlightenment (*Cultur-Kampf*) been more fiercely waged than in North



Germany, and even those who thoroughly sympathised with Bismarck in his objects, and who know from bitter experience how impossible it is to induce the Catholic Church to subordinate itself to State necessities, may think that the Chancellor has been indiscreet by carrying repressive measures to a point at which they appear dangerously like persecution. At the present moment the German Government has relaxed a good deal of its severity, but has not been able to arrange a treaty of peace with the Pope. As Dr. Busch omits all direct notice of this struggle, we presume it does not in his opinion conduce to Bismarck's reputation. Bismarck's attitude towards Socialism promises to be more important historically. He began by arming himself with extraordinary powers to repress the excesses of agitators. Having thus asserted the authority of the State, he proceeded to legislate with the view of reforming social abuses. His programme is very comprehensible to Englishmen, and comprehends limitation by law of the hours of labour, and compulsory insurance for workmen against accidents and destitution. Besides this, he has recognised the principles of a progressive property tax, and is a decided protectionist. It is noticeable that he is not afraid of a name that is the terror of most continental economists.

"Why," he said to Dr. Busch, "should the regular soldier, disabled by war, or the official have a right to be pensioned in his old age and not the soldier of labour. This thing will make its own way; it has a future. When I die possibly our policy will come to grief. But State Socialism will have its day, and he who shall take it up again will assuredly be the man at the wheel."

In private life, Bismarck is profoundly religious; not exactly after the Christian fashion, but as one of the old prophets or law givers of the Jewish people might have been. He ascribed the German victories over the French to the fact "that I know that there is Some One who sees me when the lieutenant does not see me." "Do you believe, your Excellency, that they really reflect on this?" asked Fürstenstein. "Reflect, no; it is an instinct, a feeling, a tone, I believe. If they reflect they lose it. Thus they talk themselves out of it.... Why should I disturb myself and work unceasingly in this world, exposing myself to all sorts of vexations, if I had not the feeling that I must do my duty for God's sake... If I were not a good believing Christian, if I had not the supernatural basis of religion, you would not have had such a Chancellor." Irregular himself in his attendance at Church, on account of his heavy official duties,

the Chancellor yet takes the Eucharist regularly twice a year, and allows no work whatever to be done on his estates on a Sunday. When the question of making civil marriages obligatory came up in 1873, Bismarck, who heartily disliked the measure, determined notwithstanding to adopt it, and said, "I am not here to propound dogmas, but to transact politics. From the political point of view I have convinced myself that the State—in the situation to which it has been brought by the revolutionary conduct of the Catholic bishops—is constrained by the dictates of self-defence to enact this law." Altogether, we may sum up the notices of Bismarck's views about the relation of religion and politics by observing that he has all the beliefs of an orthodox German Protestant, but that he holds the State to be supreme over the Church "in the kingdom of this world," and the school to be the chief weapon of the State.

In Parliament, Bismarck is a poor orator, but a vigorous and able debater. He has often expressed an opinion that a good orator cannot be a sound statesman, because he must be easily inflamed himself if he is to kindle others; and he appears to set down the best speakers of Germany as windbags. Of his own style, Dr. Busch says that "in close neighbourhood to clumsy and some-

times almost shapeless sentences one frequently comes across others of admirable construction, expressing his thoughts simply and clearly." We may quote one characteristic specimen of his powers in this direction: "A war made by Prussia to establish the Union would remind one of the Englishman who fought and thrashed a sentry in order to hang himself in the sentry-box, that being a right which he considered it his duty to vindicate on his own behalf, and that of every free-born Briton." It will easily be understood that his table talk is much more lively and drastic than his orations. Were a good collection of it made, the resemblance between Bismarck and Luther would be very apparent—the same vigorous solid sense, the same sledge-hammer style, a curiously wide range of information in both, and in both a vein of morbid and singular superstition. Doctor Busch tries to explain away the superstition as a humorous affectation, but it is evident that till very lately he himself believed in it.

Posterity will no doubt form a clearer estimate of Bismarck than we can do. It is difficult to believe that he will not always rank in German and even in European history as a man who has contributed more than any other to make his epoch and his country and to fashion the map of

Europe anew. Whether a more civilised age than our own will regard him as more than a splendid barbarian—strong, faithless, and unscrupulous as an old Goth—is a speculation we need not now enter upon.

1883

## XI.—EMERSON <sup>1</sup>

THERE is a curious parallelism between the intellectual development of Emerson and Carlyle up to a certain point. Each personified an inevitable reaction against the Philistinism of English society and English literature in the old and new world. Each declared that the undying element in man was in his soul and not in his dress or even his tricks of gait. Whatever was young and hopeful and vigorous drew to the new leaders in either society; and the two leaders drew towards one another in a very beautiful friendship. Gradually, however, as years went on, it became evident that Carlyle, in spite of what seemed the more massive literary talent, had spoken himself dry, and had

<sup>1</sup> *Emerson at Home and Abroad*, by Moncure Daniel Conway. London: Trübner & Co. *The Correspondence of Thomas Carlyle and Ralph Waldo Emerson*, 1834—1872. London: Chatto & Windus.

no more message of any real significance to deliver, though he was shouting louder than ever, as if to reassure himself. In fact the gospel of heroes and heroism, of silent strength and transcendental realities, had come in the evangelist's own mouth to be a gospel of all possible unclean things—of fierce contempt for subject races in Ireland and Jamaica, and the United States; of veneration for Lynch law and court martials, with the drill sergeant and the British aristocracy pointed out as the highest outcome of civilisation. It is impossible to measure the loss which England has sustained, as the better men of the time silently concluded that Carlyle, with all his magnificent capabilities of intellect, his proclamation of a message to man, was no better than a wind-bag. True, we have had compensation in the great affluence of clear scientific thought; in Mill and Darwin and Huxley; but the very excellence of these men as specialists has widened the gulf between positive knowledge and what we may call speculative insight. So far as the school of Mr. Carlyle exists—and it has a representative of genius in Mr. Ruskin—it has changed from a protest against shams into a protest against common sense. Meanwhile the specific influence of Emerson has appeared to pass away also with the American

war. There is no longer any school of thinkers in Boston affecting a quaint philosophical jargon, and vainly looking out for an object in life. The war took up the aimless heroism and inarticulate faith of New England to its own uses. The long muster roll of Harvard graduates who died fighting for freedom in the southern battle-fields attests how thoroughly Emerson and the idealists of Brook Farm had sown the seeds of simple devotion to duty in a materialistic society. Emerson and his teaching are no longer a need of the times, and their fashion has been outlived; but the man's writings are still a literary influence, colouring even modern thought appreciably; and the memory of the man himself—simple, lovable, truthful, and permitted to see truth to the last—is rather likely to dilate than to dwindle with time.

We have said that Carlyle impresses us as having been an abler man than Emerson. If we measure genius by priority of conception we think it is evident that Emerson derived the first impulse from the Scotchman; if we measure it by intensity we know nothing in Emerson that can compare for brilliancy and originality with the best passages of the *Life of Cromwell* and of the *French Revolution*; and if we measure it by volume, Carlyle has unquestionably produced more of various and



high excellence. On the other hand, we have to discount this estimate by a curious difference in the nature of the two men. Carlyle was perpetually speaking, even though his thought had not matured, or was the merest phantasm of a thought. As Emerson says in a singularly fine criticism of *Past and Present*: "Carlyle must write thus or nohow, like a drunken man, who can run but cannot walk. . . . Fault perhaps the excess of importance given to the circumstance of to-day. . . . But everything must be done well once; even bulletins and almanacs must have one excellent bulletin and almanac. So let Carlyle's be the immortal newspaper." Emerson's fault, on the other hand, was a certain reserve of high breeding, which seemed to be perpetually checking him back from superfluous speech. On no one did he impose himself as a prophet, a teacher, or even a talker. Again, Carlyle was essentially an artist studying a revolution chiefly for its scenic effects, and discerning essential forms through artistic lines. Emerson, on the other hand, was essentially a metaphysician, working back in a logical New England way to first principles and laws. It was a necessity for Carlyle to overflow his subject in rhetoric. Emerson found a better expression for his thought in epigram. Taking

account of these differences, we can understand the greater exuberance of life and fancy in the Scotchman, while we do justice to the New Englander's unswerving precision of thought. Carlyle's style ran away with him; Emerson's was a restraining influence.

The father and grandfather of Ralph Waldo Emerson were Nonconformist Ministers of the Armenian School in Concord. Deprived of his father when he was only eight years old, young Emerson owed the first impressions of his life to three remarkable women of the New England type, highly educated, and of extreme religious sensibility. The widow was just rich enough to afford her children a liberal education, and so poor that the philosopher as a boy was often employed to tail his mother's cow. Entering Harvard when he was only fourteen Emerson graduated with some distinction when he was eighteen (1821), and five years later was called to the Unitarian Ministry. His biographer supposes that he chose this profession in order to please his mother, who had been disappointed when an elder brother, William, who had imbibed sceptical opinions, declined to take orders. For a time Ralph Emerson seemed likely to win reputation as the fashionable preacher of Boston. Unitarianism appears to outsiders the least exact-

ing of Protestant sects in its demands upon individual liberty of thought, though we are well aware that its ablest English representatives have had occasion to find their fetters not the less real for being simple and few. His church permitted the young minister to interpret the saving of the soul as the preservation of mind and character; it allowed him to say that all men on whom the light of revelation really shone were substantially of the same mind; and it let him invite anti-slavery lecturers into his church. A time came, however, when even the tolerance of the Boston Unitarians could endure no further change. Having convinced himself that the Lord's Supper was not intended to be imposed as a memorial feast on the whole world, Emerson requested his flock to let him "disuse the elements and relinquish the claims of authority." The congregation considered and declined the proposal, requesting their minister to continue his services as usual; but Emerson refused to comply, and resigned his charge after a single explanatory sermon. "This mode of commemorating Christ is not suitable to me. That is reason enough why I should abandon it." Henceforth Emerson was a religious outcast; and we must not measure the significance of this situation by the latitude now accorded to religious

change in America. Fifty years ago a seceder from all churches was looked upon much as a communist is regarded in France. For years Emerson was denounced in the dialect of Christians everywhere as illogical, a lunatic, and an infidel. The Quakers were the only Church body who showed any tenderness for him. It is surmised indeed that the sight of a Quaker lady, whom he venerated, leaving the church whenever the Lord's Supper was administered was the first occasion of Emerson's doubts as to the intrinsic value of the ceremony.

The few months that succeeded were the "storm and throng" period of Emerson's life. His friendships in the congregation were severed; his mother was deeply grieved; and the death of his wife a little before he took the final step had shut him out from consolation at home. Not unnaturally, the lonely man found refuge in foreign travel, drawn to Europe chiefly, it would seem, by his desire to see certain Englishmen of letters, especially Coleridge, Wordsworth, Landor, and Carlyle. We gather from his notes of travel that he found the two first eminently disappointing, but considered Landor more than equal to his reputation. With Carlyle, from whom he had expected most, he was charmed; and indeed, Carlyle was at this

time in the full maturity of his powers. The journey altogether stimulated and refreshed Emerson, and he returned to America better able to do his day's work. Thenceforward the tenor of his life seems to have been singularly even. In 1835 he made a second and very fortunate marriage, and enjoyed thenceforth a house and permanent income of about three hundred pounds a year. His lectures seem to have brought him in another hundred pounds, averaging about four pounds a night, and latterly he received a windfall now and again as one of his books sold off. On these means he lived simply but liberally, never, so far as we can judge, wasting a regret on the meagre pay accorded to his superlative intellect, and only changing into the man of business when it became a question of disposing of one of Carlyle's works to the best advantage. He had fixed his home in Concord, but his real influence was undoubtedly rather in Boston, where young men of high aspiration and uncertain aims began to look up to him as their teacher. In Concord he was rather the old resident, connected by immemorial family ties with the place and appreciated for his simple kindliness and for certain occasional religious utterances.

Before many years were over the question

whether Emerson intended to be the founder of a new church or simply an influence in men's lives came before him in a very remarkable way for solution. A number of the most thoughtful men and women in Boston determined to escape out of actual life with its drudgery and sordid aims, and to cultivate philosophy and farming together. The men were to follow the plough, the women to churn or do household work in the morning, and all were to meet in the evening to talk over Plato and poetry. Hawthorne, Margaret Fuller, G. W. Curtis, Alcott, and others more or less notable were among the first members of the community; and it depends on what we regard as the essential aim of the undertaking, whether we set it down as a failure or a success. Financially, it was not profitable; the site was chosen for its beauty and because it lay conveniently near Boston, and these considerations did not figure to the profit side in the balance sheet. A graver fault was the want of an efficient manager. "But there were never such witty potato patches and such sparkling corn fields before or since," says G. W. Curtis. "The weeds were scratched out of the ground to the music of Tennyson or Browning, and the nooning was an hour as gay and bright as any brilliant midnight at Ambrose's."

Some of us would think six years of our lives well wasted on healthy country life amid such surroundings. Hawthorne, however, it is fair to state, gives a very different view of Brook Farm. He declares that they all worked so earnestly that, when evening came, they were fit for nothing but heavy suppers and sleep, and on Sundays cared for nothing so much as to lean over the pigsties scratching the pigs' backs. Finally, he concluded that a man's soul might "be buried and perish under a dung heap or in a furrow of the field, just as well as under a pile of money," and declared that even his "custom-house experience was not such a thralldom and weariness." The management that despatched Hawthorne, reserved and fastidious to a fault, to sell a calf in a crowded cattle fair, had certainly lost sight of the guiding principle of socialism—"Every man according to his capacity." Perhaps the world has lost nothing by the disgust that animates Hawthorne's *Memories of Brook Farm*. His tendency to idealism was so pronounced that nothing but actual disappointment could have inclined the balance in his own judgment to an equipoise.

We regard it as the highest possible proof how well balanced Emerson's mind was that he resisted

all the seductions of Brook Farm, and positively refused to become its patriarch at any price, though he visited it from time to time, carrying his own serene light into the chaos of futile work and ambitious thought. The fact is Emerson was in no sense a prophet inaugurating a new order, but a scientific man arranging nature and morals, and his interest lay in the world around and behind him, not in any sense in that which had not yet been lived.

“Life, nature, love, God, and affairs of that sort,  
He looks at as merely ideas; in short,  
As if they were fossils stuck round in a cabinet,”

says Lowell, in a singularly just estimate of him. Now it is perfectly true that the man who has absolute insight into past and present ought to be equally able to discern the future; but it does not at all follow that he will care to do so. Emerson did not. The world came to him requiring a creed, and he answered it by explaining the laws of God and the conditions of character. Not for him to supply lives with convictions or hands with work, any more than for the physician, who has sweetened the air, to go on and supply muscular motion to the lungs. We do not say that Emerson was the more perfect man for



possessing this evenly balanced judgment. The demonstrator is not above the naturalist, though the demonstrator's specimens may exist centuries long in glass bottles while the naturalist's classification is superseded in his own lifetime. In fact the need of action—the craving to change our social or religious position from time to time—is so completely a part of human nature that we prefer Utopia with its day-dreams and its disillusionments to the passionless uneventful life of scientific analysis. Why understand what we are unless we are to move forward into something better and nobler; and how is human life to become perfect if knowledge is absolutely divorced from action?

We may now understand the meaning of these supremely shallow and irrational criticisms, according to which Emerson is obscure. The American joke that when Emerson interviewed the Sphinx she said to him "You're another," explains the puzzle of a society which was always asking its teacher for a sign and could get nothing out of him but directions for daily life. Certainly it is that Emerson's style is perfectly simple and lucid. We will not say it is quite unaffected, for there is a flavour of eighteenth century English about it, as if the writer's sympathy with a high-bred

lucidity of style now obsolete had led him to copy even the tricks of speech which were natural to writers of the early Georgian era. No one, however, can doubt what the author has been meaning to say. The remark of one of his humblest hearers at Lexington, "We are very simple people here and don't understand anybody but Mr. Emerson," is conclusive proof that Emerson was in fact not a difficult but a particularly clear writer. Indeed, the fault of his mind was to aim at epigram; and though a system stated in epigrams would give out rather a jerky light than a diffused radiance, the effort to concentrate more than compensates this in any but extreme cases by the finish it compels the thinker to give to every separate thought in a long chain. Every sentence in one of Emerson's essays is lucid; and the thought of every sentence agrees with the main argument of the essay. Why readers are sometimes haunted with a sense of insufficiency is because the truths Emerson has stated seem so simple and matter-of-fact that it is difficult not to suppose there is something behind. The experimenter's scalpel has laid the dead body of truth bare, and we see the course of muscles and nerves, but we want life breathed into them again. Given that nature is of this.

kind and that human nature has such and such capabilities, is it creditable that a man of Emerson's power would simply show us what we have eyes to see without going on to explain what we cannot discern? Emerson, of course, is entitled to answer that until science enlightens us we are as little able to see what is around us as what is ahead of us, and that it is no part of his science to touch the springs of will. After all is said we are haunted with a sense that the teacher has wantonly kept us back from a Pisgah, on which he himself stood with infinite prospect stretched out before him.

The incompleteness of Emerson's powers seems to attach to his life. Full of insight, suggestive, lovable as he was, he was rather a hint than an impulse to his own generation, and added nothing in later life to the promise of early manhood. It is scarcely, we think, accidental that two of his most characteristic pupils, Hawthorne and Thoreau, shrunk from the society of their fellow men and withdrew into isolation. All were capable of sympathising keenly with moral right when they saw it. Thoreau used to shelter fugitive slaves; Hawthorne turned his keen literary shaft against English support of slavery; and Emerson himself faced a crowd of angry roughs at Boston and

procured a hearing for an anti-slavery speech. In general, however, the slavery struggle was one for which Emerson was not adequately endowed; and we should like some proof of Mr. Conway's statement, that during the war, "no man did better service than Emerson with voice, pen, and means." This is not the only instance in which Mr. Conway misapprehends and over-rates his teacher. We have seldom read anything more ridiculous than the statement that Emerson anticipated Darwin's *Theory of Development* because a passage in an unpublished lecture says "the brother of the hand existed ages ago in the flipper of the seal." The unity of types among the vertebrata was discovered by great and small naturalists before Darwin built up a system upon it, and Emerson may have derived his theory from Lamarck or Oken, or from a score of less known writers. Neither could such an anticipation have had the smallest real value, if the claim to it were well founded, unless it was derived from scientific experiments.

The two books we have quoted for Emerson's life are of very unequal value. Mr. Conway's book is full of interesting matter, but it is written in a style of transcendental gush that leaves us much as we were for a knowledge of Emerson's

real position in the world of thought and letters. Let readers contrast Lowell's estimate of Emerson in his *Fable for Critics* and his article on Carlyle with this rhapsody, and they will see the difference between a consummate artist and an enthusiastic literary man. The correspondence of Carlyle and Emerson will, we think, prove very disappointing. A great part of it is taken up with matters of business. Carlyle's letters are largely made up of rant, and Emerson, especially in his later years, seems to write with a certain reserve, as if afraid of wearing his soul on his sleeve. The most noteworthy passage we have found is one in a letter of 1840, in which he seems for a short moment to have meditated accomplishing the task which the world asked of him:—"I incline to write philosophy, poetry, possibility—anything but history. And yet this phantom of the next age limns himself sometimes so large and plain that every feature is apprehensible and challenges a painter." Character in the shape of fate forbade that even the first pages of this history should be written.

October 6th, 1883

XII.—MAZZINI <sup>1</sup>

MR. MYERS is one of a small number of scholarly Englishmen who have made the politics and literature of modern France and Italy their special study, and he unites great critical insight to the command of a singularly perfect style. When we say that Mr. Myers manifestly places M. Renan on a higher pedestal than he assigns to M. Victor Hugo, we have said enough to indicate that Mr. Myers belongs to the Greek school in art, and prefers culture and the reserve that borders on reticence to irregular strength and the inspiration that passes into self-abandonment. Accordingly the first essay in the volume—an examination of Mazzini's life and work—appears to us to deserve special attention. The ordinary revolutionist belongs undoubtedly to what

<sup>1</sup>*Essays (Modern)*, by F. W. H. Myers. London: Macmillan & Co.

we may call the romantic school in politics, just as the ordinary statesman belongs to the classical school. The common estimate formed of Mazzini by his contemporaries was that he was an impracticable fanatic, willing to compass his means by assassination or at any conceivable cost of human suffering, and steadily opposing himself to any reasonable compromise in the shape of partial emancipation or constitutional monarchy. To this a few added that he was vain and ambitious. If these charges have fallen now into partial oblivion it is not because they have been abandoned, but because Mazzini has been comparatively forgotten. Cavour and Garibaldi have effaced the man who was a greater political force than either from the memory of this generation. All the more satisfactory is it to find a supremely reasonable critic, such as Mr. Myers, coming forward to give a judicial estimate of the very remarkable man, who for twenty years was the incarnation of Italian revolt, whose political dreams have become facts or possibilities, and who produced such an impression of austere morality in the minds of his followers that men died like Quadrio, affirming their belief in "God, Mazzini, and duty."

Let us first say that we think Mr. Myers does

a little less than justice to the Italians when he complains of them for not having "learnt to die" thirty years ago, and argues that if every Italian city had fought like the Romans under Mazzini, or the Venetians under Manin, Austria might have been driven out of the Peninsula many years before she actually withdrew, and might have been driven out without French aid. This is, in fact, to assume that 25,000,000 of men who had been misgoverned for centuries, and who were steeped in ignorance, could suddenly have risen to the height of a magnificent heroism. As a matter of fact, there is scarcely an instance of an unaided national rising succeeding against a standing army where the soldiers are stanch. The oppressed people is always obliged to call in foreign help. James II was driven out by Dutch troops after he had crushed English rebellion. The Americans owed their triumph to the French succour under Rochambeau. Belgium could not have shaken herself free from Holland but for French aid. There is no question that Italy had a magnificent chance in 1843, and if the people had all been Mazzinists at that time they would deserve Mr. Myers' reproaches. As a fact, the republicans were never more than a small part of the population of the large towns; they were



steadily thrust aside by the Piedmontese; and when the last moment of the struggle came only a few hundreds of them had been armed and organised long enough to count for soldiers. Neither in their unexpected twelve months of liberty had they been able to agree among themselves what it was they wanted. Rosmini wanted a Church State; Massimo d'Azeglio a cluster of constitutional monarchies; Charles Albert a federation with Piedmont for its Prussia; Mazzini was preaching a republic; the "Codini" (pigtailed) or old nobility wanted to keep their grand dukes and petty courts; and the "Neri" or priestly party wanted Austria, or absolutism, or anything but free institutions. It was not cowardice, but the want of a steady purpose that paralysed the Italian people at this critical time. Twelve years later they fought magnificently in every part of Italy; and Garibaldi's conquest of Sicily and Naples is the most conspicuous instance we know of a rising in which irregulars have driven regular troops out of every position. The fact is—and it is a very fortunate fact—it takes a great deal more than street barricades and tumultuary levies to upset an established order of any kind. The best Italians—men unsurpassed in any country of the world—dedicated their lives to the work. Gari-

baldi and Victor Emmanuel among heroes; Cavour, Bismarck, D'Azeglio and Poerio among statesmen; Rosmini, Tosti, Passaglia and Liverani among churchmen; Giusti and Leopardi among poets; Mazzini among transcendentalists, are only a few of the more conspicuous men who have rolled away the stone from the sepulchre of Italian liberty. We doubt if the list can be paralleled from any country in Europe during the same time.

Mazzini stands alone in this magnificent roll. A statesman by profession, he was more a dreamer than any other great statesman of his time, in the sense that he saw less clearly than they what was possible at the moment; but his dreams were those of a prophet, and have come true. He was right in thinking that Austria must be driven out; right in thinking that it could be done by repeated efforts; right in thinking that all Italy must unite into one nation; and right in thinking that the nation itself must decide its own form of government. Mr. Myers observes that the best men for a long time held it impossible to dislodge Austria or to unite Italy. The assumption only lately exploded was that Tuscans, Neapolitans and Piedmontese could never be fused into a single people. The dreamer saw better than the poli-

ticians in this matter. With regard to Mazzini's other particular views we need not quarrel with his preference for a republic, as it was formed at a time when the royal families of Italy appeared to be hopelessly stupid and immoral. He himself was reconciled to the monarchy under a constitutional king. There remain, then, only two special points in the analysis given by Mr. Myers. The doctrine that "it is useless to expect help from Catholicism in regenerating Italy," has been miserably verified. The Church had its saving opportunity in a Pope supremely capable of good impulses, and Pio Nono faltered, and threw away the one heroic chance of glorifying his faith by the surrender of the temporalities. It was in his power to take the hearts of republicans by storm, and he preferred to ally himself with Louis Napoleon. So we come to Mazzini's last position, that a purer religion must be preached from Rome, and Rome must once more assume the moral leadership of the world. Certainly there is not much chance of a new gospel from London or Paris or Berlin. If Rome has any new truth to give us, the fields are white for the harvest.

Those who have followed us thus far will perhaps wonder how it was ever possible to regard Mazzini as a dangerous and sanguinary fanatic.

The one fault of Mr. Myers' essay lies, we think, in the fact that he has not examined the charges that have been more or less believed against Mazzini's character. They may be stated, we think, as five:—(1) That he sanctioned assassination; (2) That he incited men to undertake risks which he did not share himself; (3) That he was perpetually promoting revolt against every form of government; (4) That he was irreligious; and (5) That in consequence of his long exile he came not to understand the Italian character. Of these the first is incomparably the gravest charge, and as it has been enormously overstated it is important to place the actual facts on record. The charge practically rests on the evidence of Mr. Gallenge, the well known *Times* correspondent, who has stated that some fifty years ago, when he was a very young man, he communicated a plan for assassinating Charles Albert to Mazzini, who was himself under thirty, and that Mazzini encouraged him and supplied him with funds and a dagger. Mazzini's answer does not strike us as sufficient. He says that he did his best to dissuade Gallenge, but at last, finding him resolute and believing that he had a mission, he consented to help him with money and a passport, though he disclaimed all responsibility for the enterprise.

At a later time he seems to have given the dagger, being asked for it. Such as the charge was, it would probably have been forgotten, if there had not been reason to suppose that Orsini was in correspondence with Mazzini shortly before the attempt on Louis Napoleon. Nothing occurred at that time, however, to involve Mazzini in any charge of complicity, and we believe his own statement; but believe also that in some highly exceptional cases he did not like to denounce men who regarded death as the fit penalty for spies and renegades. His theory was dangerously loose, but his practice was unimpeachable where he was armed with power. When he was Triumvir in 1849 he punished assassination with peculiar severity, threatening to send half his force to Ancona if such crimes were repeated under the name of liberty. He could scarcely have acted thus fearlessly if he had ever preached the theory of the dagger. Let us add that Englishmen who knew him intimately, such as Carlyle, F. D. Maurice, and Stansfield, undoubtedly showed by the confidence they placed in him that they held him guiltless of this ignoble form of violence. A final verdict by dispassionate inquirers will, we think, be that he fell short of his duties as a moral teacher and a leader in discussing political murder

as a question of casuistry, and allowing his followers to suppose that now and again an assassin, under exceptional circumstances, might be God's minister.

The other charges may be easily disposed of. Mazzini risked liberty and life as fearlessly as any soldier of liberty. No man has ever set the Continental police more fearlessly at defiance. When the French police on one occasion discovered his hiding-place, he passed off a friend upon them as himself, and, while the supposed Mazzini was escorted across the frontier, remained behind to continue his combinations. His adventures in Austria and Italy, which he used to visit from time to time, were such as demanded singular audacity and nerve. The Austrian police were constantly informed by their spies that he intended a visit; and are said now and then to have examined the very trains in which he was travelling, but they never penetrated his disguises. One of his favourite make-ups, we believe, was the shovel-hat and apron of an English Dean. Neither was Mazzini deficient in the more vulgar courage of a soldier. "Colonel Medici," says Mr. Myers, "has described his conduct as a private in the disastrous campaign of Garibaldi's volunteers near Milan, in 1848, in terms which recall the well

known story of the constancy of Socrates in the retreat from Potidæa." Neither is it possible to suppose that a man who had the heroic instinct like Mazzini, who understood how brave men would think, and how men of honour ought to die, would have sullied his actual career by cowardice. On his election as Triumvir the officers of the National Guard told him that most of the guard would refuse to defend the city. "It seemed to me," he says, "that I understood the Roman people better than they," and he put the question to the troops, and was answered by a universal shout for war. Later on, when the defence of Rome was hopeless, he proposed that all who loved liberty and honour better than life should go in a body into the Campagna and fight there against France and Austria combined till they were themselves exterminated. Garibaldi actually carried out something like this programme with a part of the army; but Mazzini could not fire the assembly with his magnificent frenzy, and he remained calmly in Rome waiting to see whether some new political combination might not be formed. The French shrunk from the infamy of arresting him; the Papal police from the danger; and he went away at last in his own good time, the last man who had not despaired of the commonwealth.

As we are now touching on the one episode of his life where the dreamer was invested with political power, it may not be improper to notice what use he made of it. M. de Lesseps who conducted the tortuous French diplomacy against him, has written of him: "I have nothing but praise for the loyalty and moderation of his character, which have won my entire esteem. . . . Now that he has fallen from power I owe an expression of homage to the nobility of his feelings, the sincerity of his convictions, his high capacity, his integrity and his courage." More than this, Mazzini proved himself an admirable administrator. Never was the city in such order. "The worst thing I have witnessed," says the poet Clough, "has been a paper in ms. put up in two places in the Corso, pointing out seven or eight men for popular resentment. Before the next evening a proclamation was posted in all the streets, from (I am sure) Mazzini's pen, severely and scornfully castigating such proceedings. . . The soldiers are extremely well behaved, far more seemly than our regulars." "Rome was never so well governed as under the Republic," was the testimony of Mr. Senior, who made enquiries on the spot afterwards. Some families, endangered by French guns, were moved for safety into the empty palaces of the



nobility, where money and jewels had been left lying about. "Not so much as a brooch was stolen." Nay, Mazzini "exempted the rich men who had fled to Gaeta from taxation, because they had not consented to be taxed!" He was equally respectful towards the Church. Certainly "he protected monks and nuns who wished to re-enter the world," but "when the people took some confessionals to strengthen barricades he ordered them to be instantly replaced, and warned the Romans to shun even the appearance of an outrage against the religion of their fathers." Let no man dream that this moderation was fruitless to aftertime. It did not avert the triumph of faithlessness and brute force for a moment; but it created the republican ideal anew in the hearts of Italians. Piedmont had struggled gallantly, but had thrown away magnificent chances, and had shown irresolute counsels and disunion in the face of the enemy. Rome with a handful of men beat back a French army time after time, and from the moment Mazzini and Garibaldi entered it its annals were not tarnished by either a baseness or a crime.

The charge that Mazzini was an anarchist is answered, then, by his government, and it will, perhaps, seem that we have done him less than

justice in treating a man who displayed such rare practical intelligence as a dreamer. We have used the term deliberately, because we hold that Mazzini's very virtues disqualified him for such work of organisation on a grand scale as Cavour achieved with admirable success. In Rome, associated with men of the highest character, like Garibaldi and Saffi, with the court and the nobles in exile, with whatever was heroic and generous in young Italy assembled under his eyes, Mazzini succeeded where Cavour would have failed. For Italy, with its different civilisations, its church and nobles and peasantry aiming at different ends, its neighbours dreading Italian union, and dreading more than all an Italian republic, Cavour was indispensable. Let us add that exiles are, as a rule, uncertain counsellors. Exiles, as Giusti pointed out in 1847, cling to the ideas which they carried with them into a foreign country, whilst the people who have remained behind are gaining ground upon another road. Mazzini never forgot the treachery of Charles Albert's early days, even after he had expiated it by laying down his crown. Even Mazzini's religious earnestness told against him. He was deeply religious, and Cavour absolutely indifferent; but Mazzini let his difference from the Church be known, while

Cavour kept a confessor in his pay and talked floridly about his respect for a free Church in a free State.

What, then, were Mazzini's views of religion? We shall allow him to speak as much as possible for himself, and will only premise that the saintliness of his private life was never impugned, even by those who assailed him with the coarsest calumnies as a sceptic. "The religious question," he wrote in 1865, "pursues me like a remorse; it is the only one of any real importance." "The arch of the Christian heaven," he wrote in a letter to the Ecumenical Council in 1871, "is too narrow to embrace the earth." "God the Father and Educator—the law prefixed by Him to life—the capacity inborn in all men to fulfil it—free will the condition of merit—progress upon the ascent leading to God the result of right choice—these are the cardinal points of our faith." "We believe in the continuity of life." "We reject the possibility of irrevocable perdition." "We believe that God called us by creating us, and that the call of God can neither be impotent nor false. Grace, as we understand it, is the tendency or faculty given to us all gradually to incarnate the ideal." We may briefly add that Mazzini disbelieved in the possibility of the laws

of the universe being violated, but believed in a prophetic faculty and in divine inspiration—"an unforeseen power of action granted to man in certain rare moments of faith, love, and supreme concentration of all the faculties towards a virtuous aim." Many, of course, will disagree with this creed as Pantheistic, or vague. No one, we think, can doubt that the man who held it passionately, and whose whole life was an attempt to incarnate the ideal, is not one who should be lightly disposed of as irreligious.

1890

### XIII.—HISTORY IN STATE SCHOOLS

*Lecture delivered in the New Training College,  
Melbourne*

I HAVE been asked to say a few words to-night on the method of teaching history in primary schools. I approach the subject with one great disadvantage, that the students to whom it has been my fortune to lecture, have habitually been a little older than the pupils of a State school. On the other hand fourteen years' experience as a teacher, and a good deal of various practice as a public examiner, have enabled me to arrive at some conclusions which it may be interesting to you to learn. Let me begin by stating that the indiscriminating popular cry for the introduction of a large measure of historical teaching into our public schools is, to my apprehension, alike foolish and

mischievous. Because the approaches of history are easy and fascinating, it does not follow that it is a light matter for a man to become a historian, or that students of any age can appreciate results that are clearly and impressively given. The great classical works of history have never been written by young men. Thucydides was a statesman; Polybius and Xenophon and Cæsar were soldiers of middle age, Tacitus was no longer a young man, when they began writing the record of the events of which they had considerable personal knowledge. In our own time, since Gibbon created scientific history it would be difficult to find a man who has done really enduring work till he was forty, or past it. On the other hand it would be easy to quote instances of men like Ranke and Mommsen, Henri Martin and Michelet, Macaulay and Palgrave, who have produced or continued to produce masterpieces when the touch of age was already silvering their brows. Time, which robs the poet of inspiration, and which sometimes paralyses the soldier, has its compensations for the historian. It allows him the leisure in which he can accumulate and digest his vast materials; and it gives him the practical insight into men and things which are as necessary for comprehending the past as the present.

Now, it is perfectly true that the teacher does not require to be a Gibbon or a Macaulay. Still, the best teachers in every department of work are those who know in and out what they have to communicate, and if history is to be taught in any living manner the man who teaches must do something more than master the pages of the most approved school manual. He must clearly be able to explain what is unfinished or obscure in the text book he uses. To do this he must know the analogies between past and present institutions, must understand, in a general way at least, if he is talking about feudal times, what feudalism really was; or if he is dealing with the American war, what the grievances of the American colonists were. So again, when he comes to talk of persons, if he merely knows Charles I and Cromwell from some admirable little compendium giving a sort of Liebig's Extract of History without flesh and bones, he will never rivet the attention of his hearers, or enable them to remember more than a few formulas. I would not willingly be thought to underrate even these. By all means let boys of a certain age commit the Petition of Right to memory. Still, as one who has grown up in an age that assisted at the manufacture of a good many paper constitutions I may be permitted to

believe, that to understand the men who made constitutional liberty and purity of religion the great purpose of their lives, is even more necessary than to learn by rote the State manifestoes which were issued on either side. These manifestoes are often almost ludicrously below the real dignity of a contest. What are ship money or the billeting of soldiers by the side of lives so full of intense meaning as those of Hampden and Pym, of Cromwell and Blake?

Now this leads me to another practical point, that while children are for the most part utterly incapable of understanding legal or political institutions, they seize instinctively upon whatever is personal and anecdotal in a narrative. I have repeatedly tried to elicit from scholars under sixteen, or even older, what the causes of the great civil war in England were, and never obtained more than the very smallest percentage of intelligent answers. Nay more, in an examination of middle class schools in England, I found that a large proportion of the scholars knew scarcely anything about Cromwell's life, except two ridiculous legends, that he was carried to the top of a house by a monkey when he was yet an infant, and that when he was a child of six or seven he had a pugilistic encounter with Prince Charles, afterwards



Charles I. The typical answer wound up with a statement that "afterwards Cromwell cut off Charles I's head," as if the State execution in 1649 was the consummation of a vendetta that began in a child's scuffle. On another occasion I was examining the Woolwich cadets in English history of the sixteenth century by word of mouth, and I put the question from time to time, why Philip II attempted to invade England. The almost invariable answer was, "Because Queen Elizabeth had refused to marry him." In a sanguine moment I thought I would convince one of the examinees of the absurdity of the explanation. I asked him the dates of Elizabeth's refusal and of the great Armada, and was answered correctly, 1558 and 1588. "Do you not think," I said, "that an interval of thirty years was rather a long time for Philip to cherish resentment?" "Yes," was the immediate answer, "but Philip was frightfully vindictive." Let me add, gentlemen, that in the popular manual of history which we have adopted, because the great public schools have, so to speak, forced it upon us, this explanation is seriously given. All the labours of Lingard and Ranke, Motley and Froude to explain the great political causes which were at work, how England could not afford to see the States overwhelmed,

and how Spain was forced to resent English intervention, have been wasted so far as the compilation of one at least of our popular manuals is concerned.

Now, I think it is correct to say that this incapacity to understand abstract questions and the great political causes that bring about war or revolution, is the result of childishness rather than of ignorance. The boy will outgrow it and if you give him the same manual again at eighteen, will fix on quite a different set of facts from those which interested him at first, will care more for the history of modern times, and less for Alfred and the cakes or Queen Eleanor sucking the poisoned wound. Let me take one paramount instance of the way in which mature insight may go to the heart of historical questions in spite of a deficient education. Shakespeare was not, I think, a learned man, though now and again one is struck by evidences of almost recondite reading, which perhaps proved that he mixed intimately with scholars. Certainly, he was not a student of Roman History in the way in which Machiavel or Hooke, or Rollin, or any number of forgotten historians were students and deeply read. Nevertheless, down to the days of Niehbuhr and Mommsen no historian understood the structure of Roman society, the

contrast between nobles and plebeians, so well as Shakespeare; and, perhaps, if we wish to realise the men of those times—Coriolanus with his insane arrogance; his wife and sister with their municipal patriotism; or Menenius, the cynical political Roman of all times, the prototype of Browning's Ogniben—we had better even now read Shakespeare than any professed historian. What genius and the schooling of experience did in a transcendent degree for Shakespeare is done for all of us in a fashion if we profit by the education of life, and bring judgment and observation to bear upon the books that supply us with ordinary material. Meanwhile, to crowd a child's memory with facts which he does not in the least understand at the time, on the chance that many years later on he may remember them perfectly and understand them, would surely be very dangerous policy. What we teachers have to do is to give the child what it can assimilate; and what the State has to care for is that its growing or adult citizens may have free access to books and instruction of every sort. Therefore, to be explicit, I would say that teachers are bound to disregard all popular cries about imparting history in forms that are of no practical value. It is no disgrace to a child of twelve that it cannot give the names of the kings of England

since the Heptarchy; that it does not know the date of the Battle of Brunanburh or the Battle of Towton; that it cannot explain what the feudal system was; or even that it has none but the most general knowledge of the last great struggle in which England fought for existence—the war with the French Republic and Napoleon. The one great principle that gives reality to the teacher's work is that nothing is worth learning at all unless it can be learned well. The record of a man's life in society, bearing, as it does, upon highly complex subjects—the organisation of labour, the consolidation of nationalities, the evolution of law, the clash of religious creeds—is too difficult to be mastered by those to whom manhood and every-day life are little more than far-off problems.

On the other hand, if we can teach little we can prepare the mind for receiving a good deal hereafter; we can store the memory with a few matters which are either intelligible to mere children or which will gradually become so as the child develops into the man. Now, in all this we can take no better guides than children themselves. I have mentioned the two or three legendary incidents which seemed to a great many English boys the only memorable facts in Cromwell's career. Those particular instances are

unfortunate, as they are grotesque and trivial; the mere scandal of tenth-rate Royalist compilers. But it would be possible, and I think easy, to construct an anecdotal history of England, in which every story which has passed into national tradition should find a place without regard to its scientific exactitude so long as it had been consecrated by English poetry, or stirred the pulse with some generous feeling, or I may even say was not paltry or extravagant. I see no reason why the story of Lear and his daughters, since Shakespeare has enshrined it for ever in our legendary records, should not be taught to our young children, who may get a great deal of good from its moral lessons, and who need not be troubled with an impossible inquiry when Lear lived, or what was the kingdom he divided, or how a king of France comes into the story. I should be very sorry to see the stories of Alfred and the cakes, and of Alfred disguised as a harper, omitted from our manuals or not told in perfect simplicity. The first is, of course, a mere people's song, and the second a story that can be traced half the world over, and that is almost provably false of Alfred; but both carry us back to the primitive times in which they were minted, and the stamp of which it is interesting to trace.

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The story of Edgar exacting a tribute of wolves' heads, and being rowed by tributary kings; the story of Alphege dying for truth and justice; the tale of the Conqueror's sons quarrelling; the story of Cœur de Lion's captivity; how John murdered his nephew; and how the blacksmith refused to fasten chains upon Hubert de Burgh; these are some of the spirit-stirring traditions that a child is the better for knowing, and that a man need not be ashamed to remember. Nothing, I suppose, is more provably false than the story of Eleanor sucking the poisoned wound. The records of the time describe the surgical treatment by which Edward was cured. The story of the wife saving her husband in this way is told of another Princess connected with English history, and was not told of Eleanor till two hundred years after her death, and then by a foreign author of no particular repute. Still, the tale is now one of our national treasures, and the child who hears it will be the better for remembering an instance of heroism which, splendid as it may be, has often been emulated, and the thought of which may be an example in after time. Is there any child who has read the stories of Wallace, of Bruce and of the Black Douglas, as Sir Walter Scott told them, and who has not carried with him a more vivid

apprehension of what goes to make patriots and heroes than if he had mastered the history of those times in a scientific fashion, had known the comparative strength of England and Scotland, and been able to calculate to a fraction the disparity of conditions over which an indomitable courage triumphed. Even in these later days we crave for the personal element, and look on the leader rather than on the masses that are led into action. In the early days of the French Revolution, when Plutarch's Lives had passed into French history, the Directory thought it worth their while to devise and circulate the legend of a French ship, the *Vengeur*, whose crew, refusing to strike their flag, went down grandly fathoms deep into the sea, cheering for the Republic. The story of Sir Richard Grenville deliberately fighting two Spanish squadrons with a single ship in which he might have escaped from them, and commanding his gunner to split and sink the ship when it was left a water-logged hulk after fifteen hours' fight, has the advantage of being literally true. Even in our own times we have seen soldiers, many of them mere recruits, who had been told that they might shift for themselves, return to their ranks when it appeared that they must give up their own lives if the women and

children were to escape, and stand cheerfully waiting death as the ship settled down under them. It is, I believe, true that the first Emperor of Germany ordered the story of the Wreck of the Birkenhead to be read out on parade to every German regiment.

I have, I hope, made it clear that I think the first lessons in history ought to concern themselves with what is exalted or tragical, adventurous or picturesque in human or national character, and to deal with the acts and words of men and women rather than with the growth of institutions or the rush and turmoil of revolutions. Is not national character, after all, the most real and abiding of our possessions? Let any man cast his eye over the map, and even in these days of our unparalleled British Empire he may calculate that what we retain is scarcely more than we have been forced to resign or have ceded voluntarily. A third of France, a province of Spain, a kingdom of Germany, Corsica, Majorca and the Ionian Isles, the freehold or expectations of the United States, Java, Afghanistan, are among the long roll of possessions over which the British flag has at one time flown. Two other Englands could be endowed out of what we have lost, and even Chatham might be almost as much startled as the



Black Prince at seeing what compensation we have achieved for our losses. Meanwhile there seems to be no change in the essential type of the people. It is now nearly six hundred years since the citizens of the maritime towns of England, being called to order by the King for having made private war against France in redress of certain wrongs they had sustained, replied to the strongest of the Plantagenets, Edward I, in language that can hardly be improved on, so admirably does it express the modern theory of the constitution. "If you please, remember that you are bound to your people to keep the lawful rights and the customs and franchises which your ancestors, kings of England, have given, and yourself granted and confirmed. And be the king's council well advised that if wrong or grievance be done them in any other fashion against right, they will sooner forsake wives, children and all they have, and go to seek through the seas, where they shall think to make their profit." It may sometimes seem as if this feeling, that the English fatherland is constituted by English law and liberty, has been at times completely obscured; so that the Englishman of the last two centuries has settled down into the most long-suffering of men, not easily provoked to remonstrate against abuses of admin-

istration or law or social organisation. Let those who think so consider how many Englishmen in all time have actually left home with all that home has most dear and gone through the seas to settle in freer lands; or how, again, the Englishman of the plantations and colonies, disentangled from feudal environments, has shown himself as resolute in maintaining his lawful rights, customs and franchises as ever his ancestors of the 13th century were. Surely Edward III would have less difficulty in recognising the people he ruled among Americans and Australians than the provinces he governed in the British Empire of to-day.

Let me now assume that the youngest class in which history is taught has saturated itself with a few dozen vivid stories from old time, taken preferably from English History, but it may be with a few instances from the history of other countries interspersed; the story of Thermopylæ or the defence of the bridge by Horatius Cocles. The question will now be whether in the class immediately above this, for which I will assume the consecutive teaching of history to be possible, we shall begin with Australian or British history. There are two strong reasons, I think, why we should give the preference to Australian. It is easier for children to learn about their own land,

and it is more necessary that they should go out into life with at least this outfit of knowledge. On the other hand, I am free to admit that there are great difficulties attending this particular course of study. There is very little that is romantic or picturesque in the early history of a penal settlement on a continent peopled by some of the lowest savages known. Such history as we have lies within the compass of a few years. We miss the grand procession of the ages; the conflicts of Church and State; the wars of rival nationalities; the relations of baron and knight and serf; all the colouring and light that we find in Chaucer, or Froissart or Shakespeare. The present Lord Sherbrooke, haranguing an excited crowd against convict immigration and hurling defiance at the Governor, was perhaps quite as memorable in his way as any of the barons who constrained John to sign the Charter of English liberty, but we do not see him softened and glorified by the mysterious touches of Time. It would be a mistake to confound the bushrangers of our fast receding period with such English outlaws as Robin Hood or William of Cloudeslie. Still, I apprehend that a skilful literary man might find a good deal to tell pleasantly and in the form that children affect about Australian history.

He might paint the wildness of the savage life, and the tribal system which we now understand better than we did; he might find something to cull from the voyages of Dampier and Cook; and something to tell about the early days of settlement from such books as Holt's *Memoirs of Barrington's History*. The story of Bligh has had a great deal of light thrown on it by recent discussion, and is eminently adapted for narrative. Then there is the history of exploration—Bass tossing round the coast in his cockle shell; Oxley driven back by a great inland sea, such as Burke is just emerging from; Hume and Hovell laboriously penetrating, through forests that are now populous shires, into Victoria Felix; Burke and Wills perishing with their work just done; and that marvellous journey by Eyre which Henry Kingsley has commemorated in noble prose. I have little doubt that in the hands of a writer who knew what to select, these journeys, which seem so repulsively tedious from their uniformity to persons outside Australia, might be made to yield passages that would arrest even a child's attention. I remember being vividly impressed by a passage in Captain Hovell's diary, which that gentleman lent me nearly twenty years ago. It was a digression put in a very matter-of-fact way, in

which the diarist expressed his contempt for anyone who died of starvation in the Australian bush. It was always easy, Captain Hovell remarked, to get water, by cutting saplings of wattle and letting the sap drain into a pannikin, and the succulent white grub, found at the root of the stringy bark and considered a delicacy by the natives, was very tolerable food at a pinch. Little notices of this kind will bring us the indomitable men who explored the continent, and are likely, I think, to dwell in the memories of children. Then comes the history of pastoral settlement in Australia, and the life of the first squatters among savages and outlaws; the life from which Henry Kingsley and Gordon drew inspiration might, surely, furnish a chapter of some interest. As for the discovery of gold and all that came of it, the outpouring of Europe upon our shores, the exodus to the diggings from runs and farms and cities, the order and disorder among the floating population, the fortunes made and squandered, the conflict with authority culminating in the Eureka Stockade, the feud between Europeans and Chinamen—there is surely material in all this for such tales as boys love. Neither is our political history altogether wanting in interest. On the convict question there is a range of the most various literature—from

Sydney Smith's light, sensible essays, through Dr. Lang's and Mr. Justice Therry's personal narratives, to Marcus Clarke's ghastly picture of convict life in Tasmania. No one would wish such a subject to be dealt with at great length in a school manual, but I think it might be well even in such a book to point out that many of the men transported had committed no real offence at all, like Fysche and Palmer, and that others, like the poachers who were sent out wholesale, were perhaps only guilty of transgressing artificial laws. The subject of transportation leads up necessarily to that other expedient—assisted immigration—for supplying the labour market, and here the admirable labours of Mrs. Chisholm would deserve to be worthily commemorated. Then we come to the modern period in Australia, beginning with the discovery of gold; and it would surely not be inappropriate for the historian to describe the condition of the British Isles when they furnished us with the fathers of our actual native Australians. England, with its pauper population, on which Lord Shaftesbury's remedial legislation had not had time to tell; England, with its factory operatives working eleven, twelve and thirteen hours a day; England seething with Chartist clubs and still animated by a bitter feeling against landlords,

the result of the free-trade agitation; or Ireland, with its redundant population suddenly smitten down by famine and pestilence, and its people leaving their native soil with a fierce hatred of English rule. It is easy to understand the material change when labourers, accustomed to regard seven or nine shillings a week as no inadequate wage, found themselves suddenly in a land where the worth of their work was multiplied ten-fold, where it rested with themselves to say what they would do with the land around them, and under what laws they would live. I suppose if we had to describe the political work done in Australia during the last forty years, in the briefest possible way, we might describe it as the carrying out by Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen, on virgin soil, of the reforms they had dreamed of at home. Grote's vote by ballot; the manhood suffrage, which was an article in the charter of 1848; Fox and Miall's ideal separation of Church and State; O'Connell's Home Rule; the Birmingham League's free and secular education; John Mill's yeoman proprietorship, have all become realities here, while they are for the most part still nothing more than aspirations in England. Of course, it is difficult to make the laws and constitution of any country, even our own, interest-

ing to boys and girls of twelve. Still, I conceive that the trained teacher might find a good deal to say of general interest. Take for instance manhood suffrage. It calls up recollections of the old close borough systems of England; of old Sarum and Gatton with their half-dozen electors returning representatives who could balance the votes of Pitt and Fox; of Lord Camelford threatening to put his black footman into Parliament; of Cochrane's and Sheridan's canvasses; and of the importance attached to any election like that at Westminster, where the constituency was too large to be bought and sold. The story of the Mayor and Corporation of Oxford putting up their borough publicly for sale, would be an appropriate illustration. Then, again, in connection with the ballot system, some of the stories of elections in England under the old system would tell their own tale. I see no reason why Dickens and Lever should not be drawn upon for matter of this sort; though, in fact, grave historians like Lord Stanhope or May give plenty of useful material.

The history of Australia told in this way with reference to that of the mother country would lead up naturally to the history of Great Britain and Ireland, which I will assume to be taught in the fifth and sixth classes. Now, in this connection



a broad question at once presents itself whether we are to attempt to teach all British history or only a small portion of the more modern part. My old friend, the Bishop of Oxford, better known to the historical world as Professor Stubbs, has taken me sorrowfully to task in one of his published lectures because as far back as twelve years I advocated the surrender of early English history. Let me say at once that I fully admit what Dr. Stubbs contends for, that the present complicated state of English society and law can only be understood by those who go back to the past. I would even go further and say, that I think men who have had to reconstruct English society in new dominions are peculiarly fitted to understand much in English and general history that is obscure to the modern Londoner. For instance, the analogy between the Crown Forests of Norman times and the Crown Land system of our early colonial days, is, I think, sufficient to explain a good deal in feudal times that is not altogether easy reading to a man who only knows an England parcelled out among private proprietors. Again, if we look to national spirit, I take it there is much more of the tameless Elizabethan spirit of adventure in young communities like our own that have never yet been chastened by ex-

perience, than England, "the weary Titan", can afford to indulge in. Still, while I freely admit all this, I have to fall back upon my first argument, that children of school age cannot throw themselves into a bygone period, and that the time we can spare for teaching them does not permit of carrying them over more than a short space. Let me add that it is a decided advantage to leave for riper years the discussion of centuries, which were largely occupied with the struggles of hostile nationalities and the wars of rival faiths. Personally, I see no reason why the history of the Reformation should not be treated in a perfectly impartial spirit. Unhappily, the very great measure of tolerance which has been established among us by constitutional use and friendly association has not yet been extended to past times, and party feeling is perhaps stronger over Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn, over Elizabeth and Mary Queen of Scots, over the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the Irish massacre, than it is over any modern causes of differences that are not actually unsettled. The difficulty is shirked at present by leaving out a good deal, and telling the remainder in a lifeless manner that is supposed to represent impartiality. In this way Luther and Calvin, Loyola and Philip II, are

mere fragments that fit into a puzzle; and the child learns names and dates instead of becoming acquainted with thoughts and men. We are really not sacrificing history when we give up such teaching as this. The period that began with the Reformation and ended practically with the Thirty Years' War, is one that ought to be told fully if it is told at all. Macaulay and Motley, and Walter Scott and Lingard are writers who described vividly because they felt strongly and knew much. We cannot give their essence if we retrench their spirit and compromise between their conclusions. The difficulty in modern history is, of course, to know where to begin. There is, however, one date which appears to offer peculiar advantages. The American War of Independence is a dividing point in history. It was not for religion, or for the balance of power, or for territory, but for the very distinct principle that an English people carried the English constitution with it wherever it settled as necessarily as allegiance to the English Crown. No men are more interested than we are in the assertion of this doctrine, and we may almost say that the battle of Australian liberty was won when Cornwallis surrendered to Washington, though Australia was not even a name at the time, and though there was not a solitary white

man on the continent. Then, again, I think that we in Australia, considerately and generously as we have been treated by the Home Government in all essential matters, have yet had sufficient experience in the weak points of the English connection to understand the unavowed causes of American revolt. We can parallel the Secretary of State who in the midst of his rejoicings over the capture of Annapolis by colonial troops asked where Annapolis was, by the British officials who confounded the Murray and the Murrumbidgee in tracing our boundaries, and by a good many who are even now not quite sure as to which are the capitals of the colonies. We can remember the days when these colonies were considered an excellent pasture ground for the Englishman with good connections who was incapable of succeeding at home, or who was too cross-grained to be tolerated, or who was unable to look his creditors in the face. We have all known a little of the irritation produced by what Mr. Lowell gently describes as "a certain condescension in foreigners," when the "new chum" has rated us for the points in which we heedlessly or deliberately differ from our kinsmen across the water; and we can understand why the yeomen and citizens of New England felt a stern delight in crossing bayonets

with Burgoyne's popinjays. Lastly, we understand the great difference of interests which may arise between a distant dependency and the mother country, which have made us protectionists, where Englishmen are free-traders, and which have forced us to thwart the Imperial policy in such a matter as the admission of aliens. Is it too much to say that an intelligent Australian boy of twelve is far better fitted to appreciate all these points than an equally intelligent English lad of the same age?

From the recognition of American Independence we pass to the French Revolution and the wars that arose out of it. Here we get a subject too vast to be thoroughly understood by children, and yet containing a great deal that is picturesque and striking and capable of being fixed upon the memory in an intelligible form. If a practised hand were to take, for instance, De Tocqueville's philosophical review of the old *régime* and the Revolution, and were to illustrate De Tocqueville's general principles by anecdotes out of Arthur Young's *Travels in France*, I think it would be easy to show why the Revolution took the form it did. Neither would it be difficult to demonstrate from Arthur Young the difference between the English and the French peasantry of that day, so as to explain

why England remained untouched by the storm of revolutionary opinion, and strongly Conservative. Take, again, the wars between the two nations. The story of the mutiny at the Nore, with its wonderful record of how English seamen behaved in the white heat of revolt, might be contrasted with instances of the disloyal and insubordinate spirit that prevailed in the French navy after 1789, and which contributed powerfully to the defeats of the Nile and Trafalgar. On the other hand, the compiler of such a book should, I think, use that military history of the war in Spain which General Foy unhappily left unfinished, in order to draw a true picture of the British soldier of that time, who fought so splendidly, and achieved so little, till he found a leader in Wellington; and the pages of Napier might be consulted for the fine qualities that made the French army irresistible till it matched itself against English troops under a competent general. I cannot think that a connected history even of the English wars during this period ought to be attempted. They will be mere names and dates in a small manual; what a boy wants to learn about the Peninsular War are a few characteristic facts about the great chief who turned a motley army of English, Germans and Portuguese into a perfect machine, obeying

a single will, who could be daring at Badajos and Vittoria, as well as circumspect at Torres Vedras, who deliberately sent away a third of his army because the Spanish soldiers were taking reprisals upon the French peasantry, who protected Paris against the Prussians, and who finally became the real interpreter of English policy in arranging the conditions of peace. If a child carries away a general comprehension of what the war was about, and how it ended, and a few picturesque details about Pitt and Fox, Wellington, Nelson and Napoleon, it is as much as we can expect or desire. There may be some who will think that it is unwise to give prominence and interest to so ghastly a subject as war, and that the best subjects for a history of this kind would be a description of the havoc wrought in Spain by conflicting troops, or the ghastly realities of the retreat from Moscow. Without denying that some prominence should be given to these considerations, I would remind those who think in this way that war is a terrible necessity, and that a great general like Wellington, fighting only for duty, is God's antidote to a mere conqueror like Napoleon. What Wellington thought of war we know from his utterances, and, above all, from the fact that he deliberately reversed his own policy in Ireland

sooner than maintain it at the cost of a little bloodshed.

At the risk of saying what will be very unpopular, I am bound to add in this connection that I think one great advantage of the study of history will be lost if we do not use it to obtain a just measure, which will not always be a flattering one, of national greatness. The belief that an Englishman can beat three Frenchmen, and is generally a match for more than himself, has an advantage for troops going into battle against odds, but is a very dangerous one for a community or its government to entertain. The history of our wars during the short period I have mentioned is, of course, very various. We were on the whole signally successful, partly because our fleet was made an unrivalled instrument of war by Rodney, Jervis, and Nelson, and partly because, as a rule, we have only aimed at conquest where conquest was possible. Still, it is well to remember that even our fleet was unable to hold the English Channel during part of the American war; that two English armies capitulated in America, one of them to a mere militia force; that we were beaten in Flanders under the Duke of York, and that a second expedition under Chatham was a costly failure; that Sir John Moore, though he saved his men,



lost his horses and guns; and that if Wellington had not been sent out to Spain there is not the smallest likelihood that Beresford or Burrard could have done anything worth remembering; that Whitelocke capitulated disgracefully at Buenos Ayres, and that Pakenham was thoroughly beaten at New Orleans. I may take this opportunity of saying that I believe if history teaches us anything, it teaches us that wars are determined, not indeed quite by "great battalions," but by the genius that can so dispose of its forces as to operate with larger against smaller numbers on the critical point. I scarcely know of an instance where untrained troops have contended successfully against trained; that is if we disregard mere names, and treat a militia that has been constantly in the field as more essentially soldiers than drilled men who have never seen a shot fired in earnest; such a militia as the Americans had at Saratoga or the Boers at Langesnek. Napoleon has left it as his opinion that the great victories of the French Republic were won, not by tumultuary levies, but by the officers and men inherited from the monarchy; and Napoleon has also told us that an army of stags commanded by a lion is better than an army of lions commanded by a stag. I the boys whom we train in our cadet corps can

be taught the wholesome lesson that nerve, courage, and strength are useless by themselves and that discipline and skill are what are really needed, the school will be an admirable adjunct to the drill ground and the camp of instruction.

The period succeeding the Great War is one in which, so to speak, we are still living. As soon as England had time to breathe she began, slowly but determinately, that course of liberal reform which has made her at the present day almost as democratic as the United States, while it has not, so far as we can judge, impaired her power of gathering and grasping empire. The difficulty in this three-quarters of a century is to disentangle from the enormous mass of fact that which is essential and undoubted. Matters like the trial of Queen Caroline or the Battle of Navarino, which filled the mouths of men at the time, are little worth remembering now, certainly not worth explaining at length to boys. On the other hand, I think more time than is generally allowed to it might be given to an explanation of the terrible distress that was endemic in the British Isles for nearly forty years after the peace. The artificial stimulus to labour given by war, the effect of the poor laws, the effect of the factory system, such as it then was, the effects of absentee

landlordism in Ireland, the actual state of the English and Irish poor during the first years of the present reign, are all matters that even a child might understand. I remember that Beaumont, in his classical work upon Ireland, gives an instance of a district of less than twelve thousand people, seven thousand five hundred of whom had not a single bedstead among them. The England described by Miss Martineau, in which the children of country labourers "struggled with the pigs for food during the day, and at night huddled down on damp straw under a roof of rotten thatch;" the England Kingsley has sung of, in which the poor were "worse housed than the squire's hacks and pointers, worse fed than his hogs and sheep;" the England of which the Poor Law Commissioners reported that the labourers were being turned into paupers and the women demoralized by legislative enactment; the England in which I myself have known a parish of fifteen hundred, where, within the memory of man, only two of the inhabitants had been able to cast up accounts; and near which within my own time a Frenchman was tried by the water ordeal, and nearly drowned for being a water wizard; this England ought to be known under these aspects to the children of the men who came out of it. It is well to under-

stand the terrible arrears which a nation that neglects, be it only for a generation or two, to care for the moral and intellectual condition of its people, has to encounter. It is well to remember how, "almost under the shadow of Canterbury Cathedral," in a district studded with churches, during the reign of Queen Victoria, several hundred villagers accepted a lunatic as the Messiah, and had to be dispersed, not without bloodshed, by the military. It is instructive to remember that while the Messiah was at least a name to conjure with in Kent, a whole generation was growing up in the Black Country, as Mr. Disraeli pointed out in *Sybil*, ignorant of the commonest elements of Christian teaching or Bible history.

There is, of course, a brighter side to the history of these times. Twice during the period I am touching upon was England supposed to have lost her place among nations—first after the treaty of Paris, when the surrender of her American colonists left her shorn of the better half of her dominions, and again after the treaty of Vienna, in the very moment of her transcendent military glory, when she appeared to be crippled with debt and unable to bear the load of a pauper population. In the first case she retrieved her pre-eminence by the daring of her people, who

stripped France of almost the whole of her colonial dominion and of all that she had annexed, and who for a time seemed to monopolise the carrying and manufacturing trades of the world. But when we come to consider the second period we shall find that the foreign policy of our rulers had little to do with the recovery of English prestige. Canning's magniloquent boast that he "had called a new world into existence to redress the balance of the old" falls rather flat upon those who fifty years later see that the new world counts for absolutely nothing in the balance of power, and is chiefly known for its capacity of incurring debts. The men who have created modern England have been the inventors who have enabled the country to support three men where it supported one, the economists, who have husbanded national wealth, and the founders of new colonies or the extenders of old. Take the inventors. We all know that we can interest boys by the story of the Bridgewater canal; of Watt and the kettle; of the first river and ocean steamers; of George Stephenson and the railway; of Arkwright's and Hargreaves's inventions, and of the opposition to them; of Bramah and Maudsley and Nasmyth; of Colt and Bessemer. But it is not merely as instructive anecdotes, or even as episodes

in the history of rational life, that these tales need be told. Except for this industrial development, and for the populous towns with which it has studded England, Great Britain would at this moment be a second-rate power, in all likelihood deprived of India, and with very unimportant colonial possessions. Take the great statesmen of England, and you will find that above all it has been required of them that they should understand the requirements of commerce. Peel made his first hit by putting the currency on a sound basis, and his last by cheapening food for the working man. Palmerston's foreign policy, if you examine it, aims essentially at opening new markets to trade, especially in the latter part of his career. Meanwhile observe that the industrial change carries with it a great political evolution. The dwellers in towns are, as a rule, democratic in politics, and non-conformist or liberal in their religious views. Accordingly we find the old aristocracy that has governed England either pushed aside or obliged to come over to the new ideas. Neither is the influence of the colonies, as these grow in population and wealth, to be disregarded. At first they are mere outlets for starving men; then they become important customers and not unimportant allies; last of all they

begin to exercise a perceptible ascendancy over the mother country. When some of our Australian institutions, manhood suffrage, vote by ballot, are incorporated into English law, when we find the eight hours system, free and secular education, a divorce bill or marriage with a deceased wife's sister, supported by Australian precedents in English discussion, do not let us flatter ourselves that we are the originators of something new and unthought of. We are only giving body and form to English aspiration; and are more English in the modern sense than England, because we have carried England without some of its outworn mediæval institutions into the life of a new continent.

Now it will be understood that in indicating the industrial and social progress of the people as the matter chiefly to be dealt with in a manual of history, I do not desire that it should be treated in an abstract and philosophical manner. The history of invention, as we all know, is as charming as a collection of fairy tales; and the history of the application of inventions may be made equally fascinating. Take for instance the story of Titus Salt, who finds a cargo of alpaca wool lumbering the Liverpool warehouses, experiments with it, buys it up for a mere song, and founds a new industry under which a great town

grows up bearing his name, and from which poverty and drink are banished. Or take one of the most abstract discussions in history, that which Peel condensed into the question, "What is a pound?" and let us ask ourselves if it could not be made popular by illustrations of the artificial currency system, when light sovereigns sold for more than heavy ones, because they could be melted down, or by the tale of the bank panic in 1825? If we wanted to impress the period of financial bubbles vividly on the minds of children, I take it that Sir Francis Head's story of the Scotch milkmaids sent out to Buenos Ayres to make butter, which proved to be valueless because the inhabitants preferred oil, would not easily be forgotten. Take, again, the question of the abolition of the Corn Laws. There is plenty of picturesque incident connected with this, if the man who describes it has the artist's eye. Cobden exhorting Bright over the deathbed of his young wife to devote himself to the rescue of homes in which wives and children were dying of hunger; the procession of labourers with the big loaf and the small loaf; the Duke of Norfolk's panacea, that the starving people should put curry powder in their food; and last of all, perhaps, that scene so finely described by D'Israeli, when Peel saw the leaders of the Tory



party, the men who had looked to him for inspiration, passing with averted or defiant faces into the Opposition lobby. Neither would it be inappropriate in such a manual to quote the fine words with which Peel retired from office: "It may be that I shall leave a name, sometimes remembered with expressions of goodwill in those places which are the abode of men, whose lot it is to labour and to earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow—a name remembered with expressions of goodwill, when they shall recreate their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it is no longer leavened with a sense of injustice."

But it is needless to pursue this subject any further. What I have said will, I think, show the general outlines of the teaching I think it is practicable to give. I have spoken of what may be done in a manual; but I need not say to you, gentlemen, that it is only the teacher who can make the book a vivid reality. If he looks upon the past with an apprehension of the human interest that is stored up in it; if he knows how to arrest the attention and impress the imagination of those who will pass out from his care to make history for a generation; then, and only then, will it have been profitable to put the keys of knowledge into his hands. With you rests the future of the teaching of history.

## XIV.—THE COURT OF NAPOLEON

### FIRST NOTICE

THE interest about the first Napoleon seems to be on the increase. The *Memoirs of Mdme. de Rémusat*, the *Life and Letters of Mdme. Jérôme Buonaparte*, the *Memoirs of Count Miot de Melito*, and Bingham's *Marriages of the Buonapartes*, are among the best read books of the last three years. It is scarcely wonderful that a new edition of the *Memoirs of the Duchess of d'Abrantes* has been called for. Mdme. Junot is by far the most gossip and amusing of Napoleon's chroniclers. It is mainly from her memoirs that Lever drew his ideas of the Court of Fontainebleau, and one of the most incredible of all his stories—that of Tom Burke's French friend, who played leap-frog over the Emperor, mistaking him for Eugène de Beauharnais—will be found in Mdme. Junot, where the veritable hero is Isabey, we presume,

a son of the famous portrait painter. Mdme. Junot was better qualified than most people to write about the Emperor. Her mother, Mdme. de Permon was a Corsican lady, at whose house in Paris Napoleon was a frequent guest while he was at college and in the army, and whom, if she herself may be believed, he wanted to marry. Mdme. Junot herself was a girl of eleven years old at the time to which this proposal is referred by her mother, and undoubtedly saw a good deal of the young general, who was constantly in and out of the house, till he quarrelled with Mdme. de Permon. There is reason to doubt whether the lady did not mistake Napoleon's sentiments for her, but it seems certain that the families were sufficiently intimate to make Mdme. Junot's position at Court after marriage that of a confidential friend to all the Buonapartes. Unlike Bourrienne and Mdme. de Rémusat, both of whom quarrelled with the Emperor and grew to dislike him, Mdme. Junot, though she certainly cooled as her husband declined in favour and the Empire fell, is throughout creditably loyal to the great man whom Junot idolised and who made Junot's fortunes. Talleyrand has said that the Memoirs are full of inaccuracies, and that they were put together from the duchess's collections, and then

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amplified from other sources by a professional literary man. It must be borne in mind, however, that Talleyrand himself, whom Mdme. Junot did not love, figures rather discredibly in her Recollections. For instance, she tells a story of Napoleon driving him back against the wall and threatening him with his clenched fist, and heightens it by recounting how the report got abroad that Napoleon had really struck him, while Talleyrand, not knowing what was rumoured, described it as one of their usual daily scenes, and gave the impression that it was quite a common thing for him to be struck. It was certainly Talleyrand's interest that Mdme. Junot's book should be set down as a mere bookseller's compilation. Our own impression is that it is thoroughly genuine. There are discrepancies in it now and again, but though they are such as a literary man would avoid, they are no more than are common in everyday life, where people speak very differently of their friends, according to the impression of the moment or the nature of the act commented on. There is also a great falling off in vivacity towards the end. This is natural in Mdme. Junot, who, after she lost her husband, was taken up with serious cares about her children and her fortune, and took more interest in the events

that were changing the face of Europe than in little personal gossip on the dissection of character. On the other hand, we think a writer of romance would have been true to his art down to the very end of the volume, and would have continued to give anecdotes where Mdme. Junot digresses into general history.

Although there has been a disposition of late years to revive a great many of the worst stories that our forefathers believed about Napoleon, they have happily not found their way into serious history. That he flayed a dog alive when he was a boy; that he poisoned one of his mistresses to get rid of her; that he was a Terrorist as a young man, the admirer of Marat, and the friend of the younger Robespierre; that he murdered Pichegru in prison; that he did not respect the most sacred ties of relationship in his immorality, and that he was incapable of an unselfish or generous action, are a few parts of the anti-Napoleonic legend. We are not prepared to say that it would be impossible for these qualities to co-exist with the great powers of mind Napoleon possessed. Intellect often saves its possessor from committing small crimes, because it shows him clearly that they would not serve his purpose, but it does not make him moral if it is his interest to tread

morality under foot. Augustus Cæsar, whom Napoleon singularly resembled in type of face, is a familiar instance of a man who must have been almost without a moral sentiment, and who certainly was incapable of pity where it was his interest to destroy, but who ripened, nevertheless, into a beneficent and virtuous sovereign when it paid to be beneficent and virtuous. What we think may fairly be urged in favour of Napoleon is that the worst scandals against him are unproved and improbable, and that the persons who knew him best believed him to be capable of kindly and generous sentiments. Indeed, were only the best features of his character and his best acts kept in view, it would be as easy to make him out a hero of faultless perfection as it has been to destroy his reputation by the reverse process.

One of Michelet's best criticisms upon Napoleon is that he was essentially "Corsican, Catholic, and fatalist." As a boy he was reserved, proud and envious, feeling bitterly his own position as the son of a poor gentleman, without friends or fortune, and very bitter against his school companions, who teased him for his foreign accent and his religious practices. The most noticeable points about his character at this time were the loyalty he always showed to his schoolfellows, when there

was any question of a punishment to be inflicted, the firmness with which he refused presents of money from strangers, and his amusing attempt to get the discipline of the military school made more severe. This, no doubt, was because he disliked to see others spending money when he could not. After he had been some years in the army he acquired habits of good fellowship, and made no scruples about using the purse of a comrade with whom, as with Junot, he was intimate. Mdme. de Bourrienne has made it a charge against him that he used to come to her house bringing his rations with him, as was usual at that time, but always insisted on being supplied with white bread, which it was criminal just then to possess or eat. Mdme. Junot tells us that she never witnessed anything of the kind, but that Buonaparte kept her family supplied with ammunition loaves, which the servants were glad to eat, and that "he saved more than a hundred families from perishing" by the care he took to supply them with wood and bread. What is still more to his honour is that when M. de Permon was in danger from having offended a Jacobin, Buonaparte went down to the club and defended him. He was exposed to a harder trial when he found that Salicetti was in hiding in Mdme. de Permon's

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house. Salicetti had put him in prison, and denounced him at a time when to be accused as often as not meant to be guillotined. True, Napoleon had been "provisionally" set at liberty, but he had been thrown on the streets without employment, and thought for the time that all his prospects were at an end. In addition to his private grievances, he professed to believe that Salicetti was a scoundrel, and he said, with a great deal of truth, that a man of honour ought not to have compromised a woman by taking a refuge under her roof. Nevertheless, though it is evident that Napoleon would have liked to persuade Mdme. de Permon to refuse Salicetti shelter, he abstained from saying the word that would have brought his enemy to the scaffold. Only when Salicetti was at last able to leave the country, Napoleon wrote a letter to say that he did not like to be thought a dupe, and that he had known all along that he was in the house. "You see, then, Salicetti, that I might have returned the ill you did me . . . . I might have taken my revenge, but I did not." Without saying, as M. de Permon did, that this conduct was "admirable", we agree with him that "the man who has no wrong to revenge cannot put himself into the place of another who has been utterly ruined by one whose



fate is in his hands." Napoleon had only to drop a hint or send an anonymous letter to the police, and his scores with a deadly enemy would have been cleared for him. Only those who have studied the history of times of revolution can know what a terrible motive power this unlimited capability of revenge constantly proves.

We do not attach much importance to Mdme. Junot's recollections of those days, except that she may be supposed to give the traditions of her family. Now, it is noteworthy that Mdme. de Permon who affected royal proclivities, and surrounded herself with friends from the Faubourg St. Germain, took a decided dislike to Napoleon after his marriage with Josephine, though with admirable feminine consistency she would not allow anyone but herself to abuse him. Mdme. de Permon's sister, Mdme. de St. Ange, who had been disappointed of Napoleon's co-operation in a job she had devised for selling some cloth and linen to the army, was another of the young officer's enemies. "Joseph," said this lady, "is the flower of the flock. Napoleon is downright ugly, as stupid as a mule, and very ill-behaved." The first of these criticisms seems curious, for Napoleon was the handsomest of the brothers in a family that was remarkable for personal beauty. Mdme.

Junot, however, tells us that at this time his complexion was yellow and unhealthy, his features angular and sharp, and that he was a great sloven, going about with ill-combed and ill-powered hair, without gloves, and with badly blackened boots. With respect to the charge of stupidity, which, of course, merely means that he was awkward and heavy in the society of ladies, there is a partial truth in this. To the end of his life Napoleon seems to have been unaffectedly clumsy and embarrassed when he was among women whom he did not know well. He once entertained his guests at a dinner-party by asking every lady in turn across the table what her age was. We are convinced that many of his most brutal speeches, such as the remark to Mdme. de Chevreuse: "How strange it is, you have red hair," and similar remarks to other ladies: "How red your arms are!" "How badly your hair is dressed!" were in many cases little more than the desperate plunges of a man who was absolutely deficient in small talk. Of course this explanation is not complete. Napoleon had a child's love of teasing. He would constantly arrange scenes or say things apparently for no other object than to make his wife or his sisters jealous or annoyed, and then was the first to be displeased or overcome when he found that

he had produced a flood of tears or a fit of hysterics. On the other hand, those who knew Napoleon best were not those who complained of his conversation. He had to some extent the Italian faculty of improvisation, and could throw off a story with a great deal of dramatic energy. Mdme. Junot says that he had a fund of anecdotes, "which were interesting in themselves, and which were rendered doubly so by his original way of telling them." Accordingly, "though he spoke French very badly, and was grossly ignorant on certain points of ordinary education, everyone listened to him with delight." Neither would Napoleon have been considered a dull talker in English society. He would express himself with great vigour and originality. For instance, there is a well known passage in *Cinna* where Augustus overwhelms the conspirator with his forgiveness and invites him to be his friend. The great Condé took this simply as there can be little doubt it was meant and shed tears over it. Napoleon told M. de Rémusat that he could not understand Corneille putting in anything so weak and foolish, till he saw the piece acted at the theatre, when it flashed across him that the words were policy intended only to dupe *Cinna*. Then his admiration for Corneille redoubled. On the other hand,

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Napoleon could not endure Molière, whom he regarded as only giving the gossip of the salons. There we get Napoleon's weak point. He was not French enough to understand the light play of wit, the exchange of parry and thrust, that were the glory of a society in which conversation was one of the fine arts. Curiously enough, Madame Junot herself, though a clever woman, with a good deal of satire in her composition, seems also to have been deficient in this special faculty. She tells us that she once persuaded her husband to take her to a masked ball. On getting there, however, she found herself so incapable of talking smartly to the persons she met, though she had the advantage of having guessed who they were, that she was glad when the evening came to a close, and never repeated the experiment.

The Empress Josephine, of course, figures prominently in Mdme. Junot's memoirs, and about so simple a character as hers there seems to be little difference of opinion. Whether she has not had rather more than justice done her may reasonably be doubted. The legendary version of her life represents her as the good angel of Napoleon, the one woman who loved him for himself, who constantly interposed with good offices for persons in disgrace when his anger was roused,

who made his fortunes when he started in life, and who took away his star with her when she was divorced. The actual facts are a little more prosaic. Napoleon's marriage with Josephine was essentially one of convenience. He wanted to have relations with good society, and apparently had at that time a weakness for women older than himself. Josephine, who was very badly off, earning her livelihood as a sort of commission agent for ladies who wanted to sell their dress and jewels, affected to despise the young republican—Vendémiaire, as she called him—and finally married him for the sake of an establishment. Whatever love there was between them was for a long time on his side. Her antecedents had not been severely correct, and she had at least two lovers after her marriage: Murat, who boasted of his successes, and M. Charles, who was constantly in the house while Napoleon was in Egypt. Even the morality of that day was scandalised, and her friends told her plainly that she ought to be divorced from Napoleon and marry M. Charles. When, however, Napoleon returned from Egypt, fully informed of his wife's conduct, and vowing that he would divorce her, Josephine overwhelmed him with protestations of innocence, and Napoleon consented to take her back, chiefly, it would seem,

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from his strong affection for her children, Eugène, and Hortense. From that time their relations no doubt were changed: Napoleon became a hero of romance, the first man in France, and was found to be strikingly handsome. Josephine was ageing. She was thirty-three when she married in 1796, and it was her turn to be jealous, not without cause. Whether she had ever been of much use to her husband by her political influence may be doubted. What is certain is that for some time she boasted of what she had done for him in a way that irritated his Corsican pride, and led him to forbid her even to speak about politics. It may also be doubted whether her influence over him was ever very real. She was a Creole, lazy and timid, and afraid of scenes. Mdme. Junot tells an amusing story of one of Josephine's nephews, M. de Cère, who, having fallen into disgrace, got a promise from his aunt that she would present a memorial from him to the General. Unluckily, in the agitation of the moment he gave her his tailor's bill instead of the proper document. His feelings of despair when he found out the mistake that night may be imagined. Next morning, however, his aunt met him with a sweet smile. "How happy I am, I have delivered your memorial to the First Consul, and we read it together, and it

made a great impression upon him. Within a fortnight all will be settled." In the one or two cases where Josephine's intercession was really effectual, as in getting the lives of M. de Polignac and M. de Rivière spared, Josephine was kept up to her duty by the importunity of her noble friends in the Faubourg St. Germain, and it may be reasonably suspected that Napoleon was not unwilling to be importuned. It is impossible at this distance of time to say whether Josephine's constant quarrels with all her husband's relations were altogether her own fault. Certainly, the most indefensible act of her life was separating her daughter from Duroc whom she loved, and forcing her to marry Louis Buonaparte whom she disliked, and who treated her badly from the first. It seems difficult to understand why the brothers did not think it to their own interest that the Emperor's wife should be childless, and it may be a surmise that if Napoleon had not tried to transfer the succession from Louis to Louis's son by Hortense Beauharnais the quarrel would not have been envenomed beyond the possibility of readjustment. It is curious, however, that Marie Louise had the good sense to show proper attentions to Napoleon's mother, who, by Josephine's incredible adroitness, was enlisted in the

ranks of her enemies. Lastly, though a habit of indebtedness may seem a very slight thing in an Empress, it is clear that Josephine carried extravagance to a point that even Napoleon, who liked people about him to be embarrassed and dependent upon him, found inconvenient. Bourrienne tells us how on one occasion, when he was entrusted with the settlement, Josephine would only confess to twenty-four thousand pounds worth of liability, though she admitted that the actual bills ran up to eighty-four thousand pounds. Anything was more tolerable than telling the whole truth. Bourrienne found that a single milliner's bill comprised thirty-eight bonnets for the month, one of which was priced at ninety pounds. In most cases the tradesmen were glad to take half as much as they asked. It is true that this money was not altogether wasted. Josephine was the best dressed woman in Europe, and the Emperor changed very much for the worse in style given to his court when he married an Austrian Princess, who spent as much as Josephine, and only succeeded in being the worst dressed woman in her society.

Because Josephine had less claim on Napoleon than is often supposed, it does not follow that he was justified in divorcing her. He had condoned all her conjugal indiscretions twelve years before,



and was incomparably more her debtor for the tenderness and devotion with which she served him since then than he had ever been for the rather discreditable support she obtained for him during the first years of their marriage. That any reasons of State policy ought to outweigh honour and gratitude cannot be maintained, and Henry VIII divorcing Catherine because he had come to love a younger woman, is really less contemptible than Napoleon separating from a wife, whom he regarded with real affection, to make a State marriage with a girl who regarded herself in a torpid way as a victim. As a matter of fact, however, the marriage was a bad stroke of policy. It is one of the many blunders in which that much over-rated statesman, Talleyrand, entangled his master, from incapacity to understand Napoleon's real position in the world. Napoleon was a reactionary bringing back the old order which the Revolution had seemed to efface, but he was himself the child of the Revolution, and no alliances could really bring him into the family of Kings. His marriage did not convert Austria into an ally, but it blinded him to his danger on the side of Austria, and probably entered into the calculations which dictated the disastrous Russian campaign. Moreover, though

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Josephine's influence was not great, it was good as far as it went, and she was often the means of hinting advice, which the Emperor's best friends wished him to hear. Marie Louise was a mere cipher; she did not care for her husband, she did not care for her child; she used to spend her whole days in the most trivial occupations. She actually widened the breach between her husband's and her father's family by eclipsing her step-mother in the splendour of her dress when they were at Dresden together. It seems incredible that any statesman can have supposed that for Napoleon to have a son of his own was to found a dynasty. If he could have remained at peace for twenty years, he might have designated his successor out of any branch of his family.

## XV.—THE COURT OF NAPOLEON

### SECOND NOTICE

MDME. JUNOT was a girl of sixteen when she married the big blundering grenadier who had attached himself to Napoleon with a thoroughly spaniel-like fidelity, and whom Napoleon accordingly rewarded with an entire trust in all matters where qualities of the head were required. It is tolerably easy to understand why Junot was made Commandant of Paris. Someone was wanted for that post in whose loyalty Napoleon could feel implicit confidence, and Junot being a man of some education, and thoroughly frank, kind, and hospitable, discharged the social duties of the position admirably. Why, however, Napoleon should ever have gone beyond this, and entrusted Junot with the direction of a secret police, is perfectly inconceivable. Junot was as helpless as a child in the hands of his agents. He engaged the first man

who applied, and forwarded on the reports as they were sent to him without dreaming that they ought to be verified. The intention was to make use of him as a check upon Fouché, but Fouché was not long in discovering the First Consul's device, and amused himself by setting his own men to cram Junot's reporters with the most incredible stories. Finally, as the reports were always seen by the Emperor's private secretary, Bourrienne, he communicated a story that Bourrienne had gone from Malmaison to Paris on a particular night, and had talked against the First Consul in the drawing-room in the Faubourg St. Germain. That night Bourrienne, as it happened, had been working with Napoleon up to three o'clock in the morning. Of course Junot was very soon relieved of his function, which he was, in fact, too honourable a man to exercise properly. Mdme. Junot makes constant references to the vigilance of the secret police which Napoleon maintained. It is evident that he kept his best friends under incessant surveillance, and had a perfect legion of spies, who reported conversations of every kind, very often with colourings of their own. On one occasion, when Mdme. Junot was in a bath at a fashionable establishment, a packet of the most compromising kind was handed in

to her, containing a number of scandalous pamphlets against Napoleon and a Royalist journal. There can be little doubt that the intention was to compromise the Permon family, as Mdme. Junot's brother received a similar packet about the same time. Happily they were discreet, and communicated the matter at once to Junot, through whom it was properly represented to Napoleon. The use of all this abominable machinery seems to have been worse than none to the head of the State. The most dangerous conspiracy of all, that of Mallet, to seize Paris during the Russian campaign, was never so much as suspected by Savary's agents. The only man that really profited by the information obtained, was Fouché during his period of office. After the return from Elba he was able to correspond with Metternich, although the Emperor had been warned against him, and to counterplot all that was done by Napoleon's friends. For spies to have been of any use they should have been under a man as able as Fouché and as loyal as Junot, and the combination was an impossible one.

The religious surroundings of Mdme. Junot's marriage were curious. Junot, a child of the Revolution, had not added to his religious impressions by military service, and expected to

marry his wife at the mayoralty. He soon learned that he would have to take her from the hands of the Church as well. The days when it was permissible to be irreligious in good society had been closed by the Reign of Terror, and Mdlle. de Permon, though quite a girl, was thoroughly equal to the occasion. When Junot pleaded that she was asking him to make a confession of faith she turned upon him with a fine scorn. "‘And suppose it is?’ said I, ‘what was the religion of your fathers? You have been baptised, you have been confirmed, you have received your first communion, you have confessed. Here, then, are four sacraments of which you have partaken, and when that of marriage comes in its course, suddenly you turn renegade, perhaps apostate.’” The scene ended, of course, in Junot’s giving way and asking pardon of his betrothed on his knees, but in deference to Napoleon’s wishes the ceremony was performed at night, and Mdlle. de Permon’s proper confessor refused to perform it, amiably suggesting that Junot’s wish for privacy was dictated by a wish to conceal his union from some former Mdme. Junot, who might turn up and claim him. A few years later Napoleon would have made short work of a refractory clergyman. When the Curé of St. Roche refused to read the

burial service over Mdle. Chameroi, a dancer who had died under the circumstances of some scandal, Napoleon interposed to get him punished, and gazetted the sentence in a notice which was evidently dictated by himself. "The Curé of St. Roche in a temporary forgetfulness of reason, has refused to pray for Mdle. Chameroi, and to admit her remains within the church. The Archbishop has ordered the Curé three months' suspension to remind him that Jesus Christ commands us even to pray for our enemies, and in order that, recalled to a sense of his duty by meditation, he may learn that all the superstitious practices preserved by some rituals, but which, begotten in times of ignorance, or created by the over-heated imagination of zealots, degrade religion by their frivolity, were proscribed by the Concordat and by the law of the 18th Germinal." Evidently the Emperor had not read the history of the Gallican Church when he was a schoolboy without drawing some conclusions of his own as to the relations of State and Church.

We are not disposed to dispute Mdme. Junot's statement that Napoleon did his best to promote the amelioration of morals produced by the Revolution, though she herself admits that it will

perhaps excite a smile. The fact is that the morals of Tahiti as described by Canning in the *Anti-Jacobin*, were scarcely less relaxed than those of the old court had been, and though the Reign of Terror produced a short access of libertinage in a society which determined to make sure of enjoyment as it was uncertain of life, the influence of the Republican movement was in the direction of austerity. Napoleon himself took a business-like view of morals, and regarded them as a necessary element in settled order. His private life, though not irreproachable, was not scandalous, and he enforced a very rigid etiquette among the ladies of his court. His rules for his own conduct—if he had any—were a little remarkable. Some months after Mdme. Junot's marriage, she was one of a large party of ladies at Malmaison. Josephine was away at Plombières, and was represented by her daughter, Hortense Buonaparte (*née de Beauharnais*), who was still little more than a girl. There were several other ladies of the party, but the husbands, who were all busy in Paris, only came over for part of the day to join the hunting parties, or take part in the evening circle. Junot, as Commandant of Paris was never at liberty to stay for the night. One morning Mdme. Junot awoke suddenly at five o'clock, and found the



First Consul at her bedside. "It is really I," said he, "why so astonished?" and he proceeded to seat himself in a chair by her bedside, and consult her about a number of petitions and business letters that he had received. Next morning the same scene. On the third morning Mdme. Junot thought it desirable to secure herself from intrusion, and being satisfied that her maid, who slept in the anteroom, would not venture to refuse Napoleon admission, she double-locked her door, and put the key under the pillow. The device succeeded, but for a minute only. Napoleon returned with a pass key, and told Mdme. Junot that he had only come to call her, and as she was not living among a horde of Tartars she need not barricade herself again. Mdme. Junot was very perplexed what she ought to do. She felt convinced that Napoleon had no bad intentions, and that he would not dream of seducing the wife of one of his oldest and most attached friends, and that he still looked upon her as the little girl whom he had known almost from her birth. However, she took the wise course of persuading her husband to stay with her that night, and when Napoleon repeated his visit next morning he could do it with some propriety, as Junot was there to receive him. Junot, who knew nothing

of the previous visits, was satisfied with the First Consul's explanation that he came to wake Mdme. Junot for a hunting party. Napoleon, however, was very angry, reproached Mdme. Junot in private for not having spoken to himself if she objected to his visits, and agreed that she should leave Malmaison at once and go back to her mother. Mdme. Junot professes to be sure that Napoleon never really cherished any evil intentions, but we think she is a little divided between this theory which justifies her in having allowed him to go so far and a little feminine feeling that Napoleon was not a lover to be ashamed of, though it was right to turn him away. Our own view, we confess, is a good deal less lenient than Mdme. Junot's. At the same time it is fair to observe that although French etiquette is incomparably more rigid than English, the privacy of the sleeping apartment has never been so much insisted on in France as among ourselves. On one occasion the Princess Pauline brought her chamberlain into Mdme. Junot's bedroom to introduce him to her. Bourrienne tells a story of himself which may serve to illustrate the practice of the time. Being Napoleon's secretary, he had fallen into disgrace by an intrigue of Fouché's, who entrapped him into an incautious conversation.

with Louis Buonaparte. For three days Napoleon insisted on opening all his letters by himself. "The fourth day," says Bourrienne, "I let Buonaparte go downstairs and go to bed. Half an hour afterwards I went into his room. I was allowed to go in always and at any hour. I had a candle in my hand. I took a chair, and went up to his bed, and put the light on a small table. He woke up, and so did Josephine. 'What is the matter then?' he said to me, in a surprised tone. 'General, I have come to tell you that I cannot stay with you. My position is insupportable if I do not possess your confidence.'" There followed a long conversation, in which Josephine took part, and which lasted into the small hours of the morning. Certainly such an expedient is the last we can imagine an English secretary adopting to recover the good graces of an offended master.

To Mdme. Junot at least Napoleon the Emperor was not changed for the worse by the fortune that made him the greatest man upon earth. Throughout her narrative his character is essentially the same—ambitious and profoundly selfish where his sympathies were not touched, but capable of unselfish and generous actions where he was roused. One story that she tells is very little known. Just

before he set out to fight the battle of Wagram, one of his Ministers brought him a list of seventeen men of high position who were conspiring against him, but so unskilfully that all their plans were known to the police. The Minister asked what he was to do with them. "Nothing," replied the Emperor, "nothing at all, my dear Count. I punish my enemies only when their intrigues interfere with my plans for the good of the people, it is for that, not because they oppose me, that I punish them. I am less of a Corsican than I am thought." The answer was that of a magnanimous and of a strong man. On the other hand, Mdme. Junot justly condemns the insulting bulletins in which Napoleon attacked the Queen of Prussia. It was one of the Emperor's greatest weaknesses that he was as sensitive as a child to attacks in the press, and yet was perpetually dictating paragraphs himself. Still, even in this Prussian war, which brought out some of the sternest traits of his character, there is the pleasing episode of his tearing up and burning the letter on the evidence of which the Prince de Hatzfeldt had been condemned to death as a spy, because he was moved by his wife's entreaties and tears. M. Paul de Rémusat has suggested that the real cause of his generosity was that Napoleon had

discovered that the evidence was insufficient for the sentence of death. Surely this is a refinement of unworthy suspicion? General Rapp, who was present, says that he was in deadly fear for the Prince's life, and Napoleon himself, in his account of the interview to Josephine, says that in two hours more the Prince would have been shot. In these cases it may be said that Napoleon was generous but not unselfish. Neither was he thinking of his ambition when, hearing that Marie Louise was in danger during her first confinement, he ran hastily downstairs, crying out to the doctor, "Save the mother, think only of the mother." Neither, when the child was first born, did he give it a thought till he had reassured himself as to his wife's condition. Nevertheless Napoleon was a devoted and tender father. Mdme. Junot represents him as constantly playing with his little son, and as taking great pains with his education, and Ségur says that in one of the gloomiest moments of the march upon Moscow he called up the officers and soldiers of the guard to join him in looking at a picture of the young King of Rome, which had just been sent to him from Paris.

Of Napoleon's sisters, Pauline, the prettiest and the silliest, is the one who figures most amusingly-

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in Mdme. Junot's memoirs. Junot had been madly in love with Pauline when she was quite a girl, and wanted to marry her on his Lieutenant's pay, and the prospect that when his father died he would come in for a capital of eight hundred pounds, but Napoleon took a less sanguine view of the situation, and insisted that they were not rich enough to marry. Why he allowed her to marry General Leclerc is difficult to explain. He had no affection for Leclerc, who was without distinction as a soldier, and was incessantly asking him for money. It was by way of paying his debts that he was sent out to St. Domingo. The fair Pauline was in despair at the prospect of leaving Paris. "I one day found her," says Mdme. Junot, in a paroxysm of despair and tears quite distressing to anyone who had not known her as well as I did. 'Ah, Laurette,' she said, throwing herself into my arms, 'how fortunate you are. You stay at Paris. Good heaven, how melancholy I shall be! How can my brother be so hard-hearted, so wicked, as to send me into exile among savages and serpents!'" Mdme. Junot proceeded to comfort her as one would a child, telling her she would be queen of the island, would ride in a palanquin, that slaves would watch her looks to execute her wishes, that she

would walk in groves of orange trees, that she need have no dread of serpents, as they were worse in the Antilles, and that savages were equally harmless. "Finally, I summed up my consolatory harangue by telling her that she would look very pretty in the creole costume. Mdme. Leclerc's sobs became less and less hysterical. 'You really think, Laurette,' said she, 'that I shall look pretty, prettier than usual, in a creole turban, a short waist, and a petticoat of striped muslin!'" Mdme. Leclerc rang for all the bandanas in the house and tried them on, and got so enraptured with the effect in the glass that she insisted on Mdme. Junot and her husband accompanying her to St. Domingo. "We will give you balls and form parties of pleasure among those beautiful mountains. Junot shall be commandant of the capital. What is its name?" In short, Junot, who had no wish to be exiled from France, was obliged to go off to the First Consul, or a request, as if from himself, would have been sent in for his services from General Leclerc. Pauline was twenty-one years old at the time of this conversation, and she did not get more sensible in later life. When she came back a widow she chafed under the restraints of the seclusion which Napoleon compelled her to observe, though "she looked

most angelic in her weeds." "‘I shall certainly perish under this, Laurette,’ she said to me one day. ‘If my brother determines to shut me out from the world I will put an end to my existence at once.’” Junot brought back her good humour by observing that though he had heard of a Venus di Medici, and a Venus Victrix, there was no precedent for a Venus Suicide. Happily for herself she was soon after married to the Prince Borghese, a handsome and very stupid man, who was an excellent match for her, and by whom she became possessed of the finest collection of private jewels in Europe. The one blemish in her remarkable beauty was the shape of her ears, which were thin, flat pieces of cartilage, without form or comeliness. Her statue by Canova immortalises the graceful outlines of her face and form, and her remark about it is likely to live as long at least as the marble. Being asked by a friend if she did not feel it awkward to sit perfectly undraped to Canova, she replied with perfect naïveté: “Oh, of course, I took care to have a good fire in the room.”

Although Napoleon in some ways inspired more awe than sovereigns generally command, and was demoralised by the servility he witnessed around him, he could not enforce peace in his own house-



hold, and was now and again right royally hen-pecked. Josephine was a very jealous wife, and unhappily had two kinds of jealousy—lest her husband's affections should be seduced from her, and lest she and her family should be thrust aside by the intrigues of the Buonapartes. Mdme. de Rémusat describes her as once sallying forth to interrupt Napoleon in a *tête-à-tête* with the actress Mdme. Georges, and but for Mdme. de Rémusat's timidity it seems that this would actually have been done. Mdme. Junot tells us that Napoleon's attentions to herself was the cause of a scene at a hunting party, where Josephine burst into tears, and sobbed till the Emperor dragged her out of the carriage and scolded her into good behaviour. The Napoleon correspondence shows that he had to bear her suspicions and reproaches when he was away from France. She was perpetually scheming to get the succession settled upon a son of her daughter Hortense or upon her son Eugène. Napoleon's sisters were at least equally troublesome. When the title of "princess" was given to the wives of Joseph and Louis Buonaparte, Mdme. Murat sobbed at the dinner-table, and Mdme. Bacciochi made herself as unpleasant as possible. Napoleon amused himself by doing everything to excite their irritation, and the next

day tried to have it out with them in the famous scene in which he remarked: "One would think we were really sharing the inheritance of the late king, our father." The end of it was, however, that he had to pay for his amusement by making Mdme. Bacciochi Princess of Piombino, and Mdme. Murat Queen of Naples, where she was the instigator of her husband's treason. Even Napoleon's generals sometimes remembered their old equality, and told him very rough truths. When he gave the credit of the battle of Eylau to Murat, Lannes remonstrated with him in set terms: "This brother-in-law of yours is a charlatan, with his dress out of the pantomime and his feathers like a dancing dog's. Augereau and I have done our duty and we refuse the honour of this day to your brother-in-law—to His Imperial and Royal Highness, the Prince Murat. And so, because you have marched through blood over this field of execution, you think yourself a great man for your battle of Eylau, and your proud cock of a brother-in-law comes to crow over us."

The notices of her husband in Mdme. Junot's book serve to make us like and respect him very thoroughly, though they cannot alter the verdict of history that he wanted the eye and the decision that are needed to make a great general. He

refused to arrest the English who were in France when war suddenly broke out again between the two nations. He indignantly rejected the proposal of a subordinate to buy up all the cotton in Lisbon, at a time when regulations of which only he knew were about to treble its value. At Saragossa the canons of the cathedral who offered a third of their treasure to Lannes were told by him that they must first make the same offer to Junot and Mortier. Junot drove them away angrily, being then in a state of great irritation, and Mortier refused the offer more courteously but with equal resoluteness. The result was that Lannes carried off the whole. It is gratifying to find that Junot and his wife were habitually on friendly terms with the English when they met, though Mdme. Junot writes about the English policy precisely as our forefathers write about Napoleon's. Junot was very intimate with Sir Sydney Smith, the Englishman of all others whom Napoleon is said to have hated most. Later on, when Junot was wounded in Spain, the Duke of Wellington went to offer him medical comforts from the English army, and to give him the last news of his wife. Mdme. Junot herself was a debtor to the Duke for a safe journey into France. After the war she made his acquaintance at Vienna,

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and learned to regard him as a friend. Yet, so bitter was the feeling between nations at that time, that when she gave a dinner-party in his honour, a French general, whom she invited to meet him, and who was one of the old nobility, came in a riding coat with nankeen trousers and dusty shoes, for the express purpose of showing disrespect to the English general. Yet this was a man who was commonly most punctilious about the forms of society, and he assured Mdme. Junot that all his brother officers would have done as he did. Truly there is a strange alloy of pettiness in the French character.

## XVI.—SCOTTISH CHARACTERISTICS

MORE than fifteen years ago there was a clever article in the London *Spectator*, inquiring what was the reason why Scotchmen were so successful in life. The writer, who had seen a good deal of the Scotch in India, accounted for it by their remarkable patience, and gave as an illustration that a Scotchman would always hear a native to the end of whatever he had to say, while an Englishman would cut him short as soon as he thought he had mastered the matter in hand. The fact, assuming it to be correct, is certainly a very important one, and would seem to testify to something more than patience, to courtesy in the relations with an inferior race, and to the thoroughness in the sifting of evidence. It may be questioned, however, whether the solution is sufficient in itself, and whether some other qualities besides patience had not been needed to give the Scotch that remarkable power of rising over

the heads of their neighbours which has by this time become proverbial. George III probably hinted at one cause when he remarked that if he ever asked a Scotchman's countryman about him he was certain to receive the most favourable account of which the case would allow, while an Irishman's countrymen were equally certain to run him down. It must be borne in mind, however, that what we have to account for is not success under ordinary conditions, but success in the face of unusual difficulties. From the fact of his country being too small and too poor to afford a field for his energies, the Scot has been compelled for centuries to make a name and carve a future abroad. Scotch cadets have risen to the highest distinction in France, in Austria, in Sweden, in Russia and in Poland, during times when the English jealousy of them was so strong as to make the continent a more profitable field of enterprise than England. It may be added that while the Scotch, from a very early time, have been noted as more courteous than the English, they were disliked at one time for a certain tone of gasconade, which probably grew upon them as a species of self-assertion. "They are vain and ostentatious by nature," says Don Pedro de Ayala, who visited them in the fifteenth century. "They are the most

courteous, the proudest, and the most impudent of all people, with a conceit and genuine belief that they are the only people in the world," says Luther, who adds that they are to be found in every city in Germany. "In every country I will myself advance, I will boast myself, I will crack and face," are the words which Borde, who had lived in Scotland, put into the mouth of his typical Scotchman. We need not ask if this estimate is true or false. If it was generally believed, the Scot abroad had this also to contend with in addition to all the disadvantages of a strange language, and different creed, and the want of family connection. Nevertheless he succeeded then as he succeeds now.

We had hopes that Mr. Paxton Hood's book on Scotch characteristics would incidentally have disclosed the secret of Scotch success. Unfortunately Mr. Hood's volume is the merest book-making. He, of course, sees that there is something to be explained, and he now and again stops to make us notice "the shrewdness and strength" of the Scotch character, or that the Scotch appear through all ages as "the most restless of mortals," or that they are far less insular than the English, or that they have strong religious convictions. What we want is something

like systematic analysis. Englishmen north of the Humber are probably quite as shrewd and strong as the Scotch Lowlander, to whom they are closer akin than to the English Southron, but, though they have a reputation for hardheadedness, they are nowhere in popular estimation as compared with the Scotch for the faculty of getting on. As for restlessness, the English proverb declares that the rolling stone gathers no moss, and it is only the Scotchman and the Yankee who seem irrefutable evidences to the contrary. The chances, of course, are that the Scotchman succeeds in virtue of a variety of qualities and a combination of circumstances rather than because he is any one thing pre-eminently. Probably, the race that compares best with the Scotch is the Swedish. The Swedes are very much of the same family of nations as the Lowland Scotch, have the same religion, inhabit a small country, are naturally warlike and have had a military aristocracy, are very susceptible of polish, and have always cultivated a close friendship with France. There was a time when Sweden was one of the great powers of Europe, because her small army was wielded by consummate statesmen and generals. Sweden has been outgrown by other powers, and has had no opportunity of associating herself with the



fortunes of a more powerful neighbour. Scotland, on the other hand, which was kept by England from playing the part of Sweden on the continent, has been richly compensated by the advantages of a union, which has thrown open the prizes of a great empire to a people who, left to themselves, must have been as weak as Sweden, and who now contribute very much more than their share to the government of something like a fourth of the human race.

The famous story of Bruce and the spider may be regarded as a parable that very well illustrates the dogged tenacity of purpose which is certainly more striking and probably the main factor in Scotch success. Mr. Hood quotes a characteristic proverb, "He that thrives (or endures) overcomes," and gives several instances of the dogged good humour with which a Scotchman has submitted to rebuffs in order that he might attain his end. One is the story of a commercial traveller, who, when he was ordered out of a counting-house, and his hat thrown into the street, as a sign that his presence was not desired, calmly picked it up, came back, and said, "Yon was an ill bird, man, ye'll surely take a look at the gudes now?" In this instance patience and good temper were rewarded, the traveller's stock

was examined, and the foundation of a profitable business laid. What is peculiarly striking about it is that this self-control seems thoroughly inconsistent with the fiery temper which from time immemorial has been noted as an attribute not only of Highland chief, but of Lowland laird and yeoman. We can understand the Polish Jew, degraded by centuries of ill-usage, or the Bengalee, ruined and subtle, enduring insults passively and revenging themselves by a good bargain, but such pliancy seems to take us into another world from that of the fiercer people who held their own for centuries against England, and who produced the Covenanters and the Cameronians. We must, of course, assume that in the Scotch character impulse, however strong, is subordinated to reason and calculation. In matters of business the Scotchman knows that anger will not advance his ends, and he deliberately puts it aside as unbusiness-like. In matters of religion and politics, he looks beyond the momentary advantage to the permanent interest, and uses his impetuosity to strengthen his action. In both cases the characteristic of looking beyond the present to the future is equally marked, though in the one case it counsels endurance, and in the other opposition.

A people with this tendency to calculate ought.

unquestionably to succeed in fields of activity where forces have to be measured. The Scotchman's intellect is essentially of the scientific rather than of the artistic kind. He is apt to be good in mathematics, though the country has not thus far produced a Newton, a Laplace, or a Gauss, he is a good engineer, a good ship-builder, an admirable strategist. He differs from the Jew from being rather a merchant, a manufacturer, or a planter than a purely speculative operator upon the Exchange. He does not seem to have the Jew's aptitude for music, the most mathematical of the arts, but he competes with him in abstract metaphysics, having a distinct school of Scotch philosophy to set off against Spinoza and Mendelssohn. Superior to the Englishman in all or most of the respects, he seems to fall below him in the highest imaginative faculty. Shakespeare, Bacon, Newton, Gibbon, Darwin, represent a grasp of imaginative range to which there has not been any parallel as yet among Scotchmen. The vision and the faculty divine that enable a great thinker to look down as if from some intellectual Pisgah upon the whole world of humanity, or the evolution of human action, or the system of the universe, seem to be incompatible with the keen spirit of analysis which is the main element in Scotch

observation, Scotch caninness, and Scotch philosophy. A people who are fond of nature and capable of strong feeling are almost bound to have some poetical power. Scotland, however, has never risen beyond the poetry of ballads and songs, of which the highest type is to be found in Burns. Her highest approach to creative poetry is to be found in the prose of the Waverley novels. We may surely say of these that their charm resides in the vivid succession of incidents, in the descriptions of scenery, in the freshness of local colouring, in everything rather than in the delineation of character. Scott, in fact, was an unrivalled story-teller, where the lowest of the Elizabethan dramatists was a poet.

Ever since Sydney Smith's famous saying that it takes a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head, it has been the fashion to assume that the Scotch have no humour, or, as it is sometimes put, that they have only a special endowment known as "wut." Dean Ramsay has done a great deal to remove this reproach, but Mr. Paxton Hood leaves us in doubt whether he himself understands in what humour consists. Many of his stories are nothing more than the blunders of ignorance or conceit. The first point we have to start from in the consideration of

Scotch wit is the undeniable fact that the Scotch mind is apt to be unready. Men who live a great deal by themselves are not likely to be quick at repartee, and a people that has been isolated among its native wastes, and that has trained itself to an austere discipline of speech, may easily be at a disadvantage when it comes to contend with races that have the habit of society. The records of the best sayings of the best Edinburgh society of old days, when Edinburgh was still a capital, are not to be compared with the reminiscences of Irish wit in the times before the Union that filled the pages of Barrington. Neither must we expect in Scotch humour that subtle penetrative essence which enters so largely into Sterne or the light touch of Goldsmith or Washington Irving. Scotch humour is apt to be dry, Scotch wit bitter. We should be inclined to cite among the best instances of Scotch repartee those of Sir Andrew Mitchell to Frederick the Great. When Mitchell once reported an English victory over the French, with the usual addition that it was won by the help of Providence, Frederick rejoined sarcastically that he had not been aware Providence was among the allies of England. "Yes, Sire," was the rejoinder, "and she is the only one who never asks for a subsidy."

In our own time, Carlyle was probably, in his own way, the wittiest among his contemporaries, certainly the wittiest among writers on serious subjects. He has left sentences that seem to sear as with a hot iron. What can be more pungent than that contemptuous description of "the new Gospel of Humanity of which Messrs. Balzac and Sue are the evangelists, and Madame Sand the Virgin?" Was an over-rated man ever more happily reduced to his proper dimensions than in the description of Cobden as "an inspired cotton-spinner, who raves about a calico millenium"? It may be said that Carlyle's wit is not eminently Scotch in its form. If shrewd observation of incongruities, and a great power of bringing out contrasts into salient relief are not eminently Scotch, we must shelter ourselves in the general truth that wit in its highest forms ceases to be local. Even so, it will remain true that Scotland has produced one writer whose wit is of the purest quality though it is only a small part of his style.

Given a strong, silent, reserved man, prone by intellect to look forward to the future rather than to live in the present, and fond of metaphysical speculations, we get the explanation of that tenacity of religious conviction in the Scotch, which made their reformation so thorough-going

and so enduring. Beyond this, however, Presbyterianism has been hammered into the race by the persistent efforts of English rulers to hammer it out. What is remarkable is that with so many Scotchmen travelling abroad, and with the Scotch mind so addicted as it is to logical speculations, there should have been so few heretics and free-thinkers in past centuries. There seem to be indications just now of approaching change, and it is not unlikely that if Scotch belief changes at all it will change altogether, and will swing round from Puritanism to Freethought, as it passed from extreme Romanism to Puritanism. Meanwhile it may be noted that in Scotland the love of gain, keen as it is supposed to be, has never led the people into such unworthy compliances as the Dutch practised in Japan. As a rule the Scotchman has kept his faith wherever he went. Still more certainly has every Scotch community carried out the Scotch Sabbath and the Kirk to every part of the world in which it has settled down.

With respect to the Scotch love of travel, we believe it to be as old as over-population in Scotland. It has been the cause of a great deal of wit. As long ago as 1647 the Englishman Cleveland wrote—

"Had Cain been a Scot, God would have changed his doom.  
Not forced him wander but confined him home."

And Dr. Johnson, a century later, remarked that the finest view a Scotchman ever saw was the high road from Edinburgh to London. The Swiss, the Auvergnats of France, and the Gallicians of Spain are all distinguished by the same characteristic, but the Scotch and the Swiss are the most remarked because of their eminent success. That there is any restlessness in the race seems improbable. Indeed, the strong local patriotism of the Scotchman forbids this supposition. The simple fact is that the Scotchman could take unusual energy and mother wit, as well as in old times unusual education, into the service of foreign countries, and foreign countries would give him in return what he needed, money and a sphere. Why the Scotchman should be better fitted for the continent than the Englishman from being less insular seems more difficult to explain. Both in France and Germany he catches the language and adapts himself to the manner better than his countryman south of the Tweed. Perhaps the simple explanation is that, belonging to his smaller nationality, he has less of that insufferable conceit, which leads the Englishman and the Frenchman to regard themselves as incapable of improvement.



Certainly the Scot, though he travels a great deal, has never forced his national dishes or his habits upon the people of the continent as the English tourist has done. Paris and Berlin may be searched in vain for a haggis or a sheep's head, while beefsteak and malt liquor follow the Englishman, like his shadow, over all the globe. It must be admitted that where the races are distinguished one from another, the Scotchman—in virtue of his forbearance—is the more popular of the two.

Books on Scotland suggest a curious question, "Who are the Scotch?" Almost every nation is made up by the fusion of very different races. The Englishman is more Dane than Dutchman in the north, more Dutchman than Dane in the south, has a strong infusion of Welsh blood in the marches, and has a leaven of French blood in the higher classes and some of the older towns. The Frenchman is compounded with Fleming and German and Basque in different parts of his territory. Still in neither of these cases is the original contrast so strong as that which divides the Celtic Highlanders, still speaking Gaelic, from the Lowlander of Saxon ancestry. Go back a century or two, and the contrast, of course, is stronger still. The Highlander was a soldier and

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a drover, often a Catholic by religion, and recognised no superior but his chief. The Lowlander was an agriculturist or a dweller in towns, inclining to Puritanism in religion, and a stern asserter of popular liberty against arbitrary government. The Highland traditions are of Fingal and of Ossian, the Lowland of Bruce and the Black Douglas. The Highlander is reputed to be proud, where the Lowlander is "dour", and the Highlander lazy and wanting in resource, where the Lowlander is laborious and inventive. Nevertheless, every writer on Scottish characteristics mixes tales of the Highlander and of the Lowlander almost at random, and no one is struck by the incongruity. Mr. Paxton Hood, for instance, elucidates Scotch culture in the old times by the story of a Highland farmer, who knew French and Latin, and had a good library of standard English works. He illustrates Scotch superstition by stories from the Highlands. Both the appreciation of culture and the superstitious temperament appear to be characteristics of the Lowlander also. We may probably say that the races have intermingled sufficiently to have a good deal in common, but above all a common history, a common civilisation, common interests and a fellowship in a common land have produced a sentiment of unity which

overpowers the indestructible differences of race. Even so, a better analysis of Scotch character would aim at distinguishing the Saxon from the Celtic element.

## XVII.—EARLY LIFE OF RENAN

M. RENAN, the author of the famous *Life of Jesus*, the man on whose lips London society, ever greedy of a new sensation, was hanging only a few months ago, though he talked of philosophy, has written the history of his early years. It is the record of a Breton who has lost his faith, of a seminarist who has renounced orthodox Christianity, of a sceptic who has restored faith to hundreds of cynical materialists, of a Liberal who, in spite of his sacrifices and his doubts, is looked upon with distrust by French Republicans, and who loses no opportunity of avowing the scorn and hatred he feels for democracy. When we add that, to our apprehension, M. Renan has never ceased to carry the surplice under the academic gown, that he is a priest in every fibre, though he cannot minister at the altar, and an aristocrat by taste and sympathy, though his life has been divided between peasants and scholars,

we have probably said enough to indicate the curious interest his confessions cannot fail to have for the student. At the same time it should be clearly understood that the book is a portraiture and analysis of character rather than the record of a life. M. Renan, who is now ageing, seems anxious before he quits the world to explain the curious position he has held, divided by thought from the men with whom he sympathises, and isolated by taste and feeling from the men among whom his thoughts have driven him. Although he writes with less "gush" than St. Augustine, and with less cynical abandonment than Rousseau, the passages in which he discusses his unworldliness, his modesty, his politeness, and his strict morality, strike us as bearing the impress of the confessional. No one who had not been trained to regard himself as a mere dead subject for moral analysis could have written so unreservedly about himself, and the outspokenness is the more remarkable in one who has never shaken off the repressive influence of early discipline. On the other hand, M. Renan writes with the reserve of a gentleman about his own teachers in the church, for whom he evidently retains the kindest feeling. They, no doubt, look upon him as a lost soul, he feels towards them as the readers of Victor

Hugo's *Les Misérables* feel towards the model Bishop. "I passed thirteen years of my life under the charge of priests," says M. Renan, "and I never saw anything approaching to a scandal. All the priests I have known have been good men." M. Renan's experience is, we imagine, not an uncommon one. No one can have watched the revival of Catholicism in France during the last generation without understanding that it owes nothing to its intellectual leaders, and everything to the blameless, self-denying lives of its teachers. That being so strong it has also been so weak, and is now visibly losing ground, will be fairly intelligible to those who read M. Renan's sympathetic narrative of the training that drove him out of the church.

M. Renan supposes himself to be by race "a Celt crossed with Gascon, with a slight infusion of Laplander blood," and observes that the mixture, according to the scientific theory, ought to represent the maximum of idiotcy and imbecility. He remarks, however, that what science treats as stupidity among the ancient races of men, is often neither more nor less than an extraordinary force of enthusiasm and intuition. To our own recollection M. Renan is a typical Breton, with the square build and serious character of the race, and with the reserved manners of an intellectual

recluse. We do not profess to know what he means by an ancient race of men, or why an earlier type, if there be one, should have a reserve of natural force which a modern type does not possess. To us M. Renan is very naturally accounted for by his own intellectual capacities, by the descent from generations that had struck root in the most devout province of France, by a childhood reared in traditions of the saints and of the Revolution, by an education among priests, and a life among scholars. Some of his stories of the superstitions that still flourished in the Brittany which he knew as a child seem almost incredible to those who have never ascertained for themselves what the country people of England believed thirty years ago. One of his mother's neighbours was a sorceress who consulted the fates to learn whether Ernest Renan, a sickly infant, would live, by throwing one of his shifts into a sacred lake. She came back in high glee. "He means to live. No sooner had I thrown the little shift on to the surface than it lifted itself up. Ah, if you had seen how the two arms stretched themselves out!" Renan's own father was cured of fever as a child by being taken to the chapel of a wonder-working saint. "A blacksmith arrived at the same time with his forge, nails, and tongs. He lighted

his fire, made his tongs red-hot and held them before the face of the saint, threatening to shoe him as he would a horse unless he cured the child of his fever. The threat took immediate effect, and my father was cured." "In country districts (of Brittany) it is no uncommon thing to find as many as ten or fifteen chapels in a single parish, most of them little huts with a single door and window, and dedicated to some saint unknown to the rest of Christendom." These are the saints whom the peasants really worship, and whom the clergy, reluctantly enough, are compelled to recognise. We doubt if there be any country in Europe where the religious enlightenment is much higher than it was in the better days of the Roman Empire. Then also there was an enlightened religion among the upper classes of society, and then also the popular faith, by whatever name it might be called, was another phase of Paganism. Neither are we very sanguine as to the changes that modern civilisation has wrought. The remark of a French peasant, "I do not believe in God, because I have never seen Him, but I believe in St. Martin of Tours, because I have seen the miracle that he has wrought," strikes us as very characteristic of a time when superstition has simply changed its object and become coarsely ma-



terialistic where it was fanciful. It is only in new communities like America and Australia, where the old associations and legends have been left behind, that education finds the mind like a blank tablet on which the primer and the rule of three can be inscribed.

Happily for M. Renan even Brittany has been penetrated by the splendid fervour of the Revolution, the war of ideas, in which faith was purified, and the mind partially liberated. M. Renan's mother and grandmother were ardent devotees, sheltering the priests, celebrating mass privately, and meeting in prayer at a distance from the town when one of the party was brought to the guillotine. Most of his uncles, on the other hand, were fervid patriots, who let their beards grow when any national calamity happened, such as the treason of Dumouriez, and one of whom openly threatened his cousin to denounce her if she was found concealing the priests or aristocrats. Nevertheless, the impression left by the Revolution on Renan's mother, was, on the whole, favourable. She learned the patriotic songs privately, she shared the enthusiasm and wild delight that mingled with scenes of terror, and she taught her son to do justice to the generous motives of the men whom English historians have so unscrupu-

lously maligned. "When I see the inveterate persistency of foreign writers," says M. Renan, "to try and prove that the French Revolution was one long story of folly and shame, and that it is but an unimportant factor in the world's history, I begin to think that it is perhaps the greatest of our achievements, since other people are so jealous of it." M. Renan remembers one old man, a stranger in Brittany, who was nicknamed M. Système, from his philosophical talk, and whom the clergy regarded with absolute horror as the possessor of a sceptical library, the books of which he was willing to lend to his neighbours. When this gentleman died, after a blameless and lovable life, nothing was found to throw light upon the mystery of his earlier years except a packet of faded flowers tied up with tricolour ribbon. M. Renan thinks that there is good reason to believe that the stranger was a terrorist in hiding, and that the flowers were a relic from "the festival of the Supreme Being." Readers of Quinet will remember his story of the old Jacobin, who declared that he and St. Just had been actually filled with a greater presence than animates man when they point to the guns of a battery against the enemies of the Republic. Such men, as M. Renan says, were

uncompromising in their beliefs, and when they were "left standing alone, like the survivors of a world of giants, loaded with the opprobrium of the human race, they could hold no sort of communion with the living."

Naturally enough the influences of the Revolution counted for nothing in Renan's school life. The first schoolmasters were priests who regarded Lamartine with profound suspicion and did not thoroughly trust Châteaubriand himself. Their idea, and it was that of M. Renan's teachers at the Issy seminary, to which he afterwards went, was that there had been no French literature of any real value since the death of Louis XIV. We may observe in passing that this opinion was not as extravagant as it may seem. A consummate master of French style, Paul Louis Courier, was warning one of his correspondents, not long before M. Renan's birth, against the fallacy of supposing that anyone had written French since the reign of Louis XIV, and declared that a girl of that time could have given lessons in style to the Rousseaus, the Diderots and the D'Alemberts. With entire recognition of what Balzac and George Sand, Michelet and Victor Hugo have done since then for the language, we confess to doubting whether the tessellated mosaic, in which modern

French thought delights, can compare with the lucid sympathy and easy grace of the old school. We suspect a good deal of M. Renan's literary charm is due to the influence of his early teachers, who taught him to write with the frankness of high bred society, and to avoid straining after effect. "That which constitutes the essence of cleverness, the desire to show off one's thoughts to the best advantage, would have seemed to them sheer frivolity, like woman's love of dress, which they denounced as a positive sin." Naturally, a teaching which did not travel beyond Rollin's compendium of accepted tradition, and which expurgated the story of Telemachus, though it had been written by an archbishop, before the scholar was allowed to read it, left something to be desired on the side of freethought, and the teaching of grammar and philology was not in accordance with the scientific programme of to-day. Nevertheless M. Renan evidently thinks that he gained more than he lost under the system generally. After all, the way in which he learnt Latin was that in which Erasmus and Muretus were fashioned into the best Latin scholars since the days of Cicero, for the mind retained and assimilated better what it had taken in slowly. That the character of the general teaching was

moral rather than critical was no misfortune to the young peasants, who came to school from a primitive life at home. "We decided that Cæsar was not a great man because he was not virtuous, our philosophy of history was as artless and as childlike as might have been that of the Heruli." Of course religious doubt in any shape was impossible in such an atmosphere. It was not brought from home, it was not in the air, it was not in the books read, and it would have seemed monstrous in the presence of simple and austere teachers who recommended their faith by their lives. "There are in reality," says M. Renan, "but few people who have a right not to believe in Christianity." "Because a Paris flibbertigibbet disposes, with a joke, of creeds, from which Pascal, with all his reasoning powers, could not shake himself free, it must not be concluded that the urchin is superior to Pascal."

The Divinity that shapes our ends ordained that in 1836 M. Renan should attract the attention of M. Dupanloup, afterwards the well known Bishop of Orleans, by winning all the prizes in his class at the Tréguier College. "Have him sent for," was the order of the impulsive Superior, and the young peasant was straightway transferred to Paris to begin his education for the priesthood in the

seminary of St. Nicholas du Chardonnet. "My coming to Paris marked the transition from one religion to another. My old priests with their heavy old-fashioned copes had always seemed to me like the Magi from whose lips came the eternal truths, whereas the new religion to which I was introduced was all print and calico, a piety decked out with ribbons and scented with musk, a devotion which found expression in tapers and small flower-pots, a young lady's theology without stay or style, as composite as the polychromic frontispiece of one of Lebel's prayer-books." It was the contrast between the puritan and the ritualistic tendencies within the fold of the same visible Church, and many of the students felt it bitterly, the more so as it was aggravated by distance from home and confinement within the college walls. M. Renan's most intimate friend brooded in solitary grief over the change and died. One rather senior student "confessed to me that, every evening, he calculated the distance from his dormitory on the third floor to the pavement in the street below." M. Renan himself was nearly dying from homesickness. His only consolation was to write to his mother letters full of tender feeling and moist with tears, and as these were seen by the superiors and attracted the favourable notice of

M. Dupanloup, the young Breton was noticed and drawn out, and gradually exchanged his old sentiment for one of passionate veneration towards his new Superior. In this college the education was of a high literary standard, and M. Renan notes it as an advantage that clerical education "is absolutely independent in everything which does not relate to religion. Literature is discussed under all its aspects, and the yoke of classical dogma sits much more lightly." Those who remember De Maistre's incisive criticism on Voltaire in the *Soirées de St. Petersbourg*, which M. Renan knew by heart by this time, will appreciate the importance of this iconoclasm. Meanwhile, the contagion of new ideas was seizing upon the young scholar. He had received no training in positive science, no idea that truth was to be sought rather than received, and his literary acquirements were superficial, but "my Christianity was being worn away, though there was as yet nothing in my mind which could be styled doubtful." The film was falling off from the eyes, and the student was beginning to see that God's heaven was higher and God's earth wider than the Catholic church.

A work of change was consummated by study, under almost the same conditions that built up

the boy's faith. The seminaries of Issy and St. Sulpice, in reality one establishment, in which the next four years of M. Renan's life were spent, exhibit the old Gallicanism in its most perfect form. Sobriety of tone, solidity of doctrine, the unostentatious self-sacrifice that finds expression in courtesy and good works, were the characteristics of this school in its best days. Its teachers did not defy the world or trample noisily upon its prejudices, but they let it go on in its own way with a quiet conviction that all its triumphs were a mere flash in the pan. Against themselves, indifference to success, and abjuring theatrical effects, nothing can be said but that they turned out dull men and a lifeless theology. Nevertheless, the first effects of their teaching upon M. Renan were simply to increase his veneration for a faith which was supported by solid erudition, and enforced by holy lives. Nor did physical science intrude into these precincts with its speculations and its doubts. It was the study of the Bible in Hebrew that first undermined the student's faith. "The mildest Catholic doctrine as to inspiration will not allow one to admit that there is any marked error in the sacred texts, or any contradiction in matters which do not relate either to faith or morality." Study forced upon M. Renan the conviction that



"the Bible contains fables, legends and other traces of purely human composition." At first he struggled against his doubts, and his director comforted him. "Inroads upon your faith. Pay no heed to that, keep straight on your way. These temptations are but afflictions like unto others." The doubt that is only skin deep can be salved over by pleasant ointments of this kind, but for a Newman, a Clough, or a Renan, for whom to believe rightly is the highest function of life, the questions of doubt are the voice of God within the soul. "An inward voice told me thou art no longer Catholic; thy robe is a lie, cast it off." Even the last terrible dread of breaking his pious brother's heart gave way before the imperious dictates of conscience. Nevertheless in leaving the church, M. Renan did not renounce Christianity. "Belief in the eminent personality of Jesus had been my mainstay in my struggle against theology. Jesus has in reality ever been my master." The secession was without bitterness, on either side. M. Dupanloup sent a generous offer of his purse. M. Renan passed noiselessly into life as a schoolmaster. His mother was compelled to admit that nothing was changed in him except the dress.

We agree with M. Renan that he is an incomplete priest, and we think that in proportion as

he is a priest is he an incomplete man. Let us take a single instance. "One of the injunctions most impressed upon us at the seminary was to avoid 'special friendships'. I fancy to myself at times, like my ancient masters, that friendship is a larceny committed at the expense of society at large, and that in a more elevated world friendship would disappear." With it, of course, family tenderness of every kind. Is not this one step towards reducing the world to that dead level of mediocrity, that vacuum, which M. Renan admits to be the distinguishing note of St. Sulpice and the prevision of which animates him in his indictment against modern society? Is it not also the natural outcome of seminary life? For the young priest, forbidden to marry, dedicated to the service of his church, and bound to regard society as nothing more than a means of doing good, the idea of individual exclusive friendships is unnatural. So also is the idea of special studies, of original thought, of irregular enthusiasm, of everything that breaks the monotony of everyday life. M. Renan tells us that he is contemptuous of middle class success, and reserves his admiration for the idealist, for "martyrs, heroes, Utopians, friends of the impossible." Thinking this, he is a reactionary in politics, prizing distinction of manner more

than fearlessness of thought, belonging by sympathy to a time in which the degradations in rank should be strictly maintained, and denouncing as Caliban and Utopian ideas knocking at the doors of the nineteenth century in the form of democratic equality. Surely it is the sternest condemnation of the old church that such a man—whom forty years of doubt cannot wean from his first love—should find it impossible to remain within the fold. A Breton poet has said that after death M. Renan's soul will fly all night, in the shape of a white bird, round a ruined sanctuary, which it will try to enter in vain. Is not this the picture of every visible communion—a crumbling church that has closed windows and doors against the worshipper and against the light?

## XVIII.—THE BLACK REPUBLIC<sup>1</sup>

SIR SPENSER ST. JOHN, who was for fourteen years (1863—1877) the representative of England in Hayti, has written a very interesting account of the island and its people, which bears directly upon the question how far the negro race is capable of civilisation and self-government. The question is one which is becoming every day of more importance. In the United States of America the negro is in a minority and will have to conform to the habits of the dominant race. If he refuses to work we may be quite certain that the Americans will decline to support him as a pauper; and if he only works up to the point necessary for his own support he will speedily be supplanted in the towns and on large estates by more docile labourers. Throughout the West Indian islands the case is different. The negro is the permanent

<sup>1</sup>*Hayti, or the Black Republic.* By Sir Spenser St. John. London: Smith, Elder & Co.

element in Cuba and St. Domingo, in our own West Indian islands and in Martinique, as also in Réunion, and till lately in the Mauritius. Besides, though races differ, what is true of the negro is likely to be applicable in some degree to Malays and lower caste Hindoos and Chinamen. The liberated blacks of the West Indian Islands are the descendants of several generations that were trained to labour by rude task-masters and converted after a fashion to different forms of Christianity. Although the French slave owners in Hayti were not exactly merciful to their hands, they had not the strong prejudice of colour that Englishmen and Americans have, and they never interfered to prevent the negroes from being educated and holding property. The coloured population a hundred years ago, when it freed itself, contained a good many educated men like the famous Toussaint l'Ouverture, and like Colonel Oge, who was sent to represent his countrymen in Paris. Since 1810, Hayti has been left pretty much to itself, and though it would be flagrantly unfair to compare it with any European country, it seems not unreasonable to ask whether it is as prosperous as an average South American republic, and whether it is on the whole going forwards or going back.

Sir Spenser St. John answers this enquiry by declaring his conviction that Hayti is in a state of rapid decadence, that its agriculture is deteriorating, that the best of its people are being killed off or dying out, and that "there is a distinct tendency to sink into the state of an African tribe." He brings forward a great many facts in support of this opinion, and though it is noticeable that he takes a harsher view of the last few years, during which he only knows the country by report, than of the time during which he was in residence, there is no reason to assume that he is not substantially well informed. He seems to write not only with great fairness, but with a remarkable absence of race feeling, and to have lived among coloured men and negroes in such a way as to conciliate their regard and be able to understand their feelings. Those who look only at the charges he brings and substantiates against the Haytians may certainly incline to despair of the future of the race. Those, however, who compare Hayti with Peru or Buenos Ayres, and who have never formed sanguine anticipations of the conduct to be expected from liberated slaves of savage ancestry, will perhaps read between the lines and think that the Haytians need nothing but thirty years of good government to become a

moderately well-conducted population. Of course, it may easily happen that they will never have this good fortune. In this case Hayti may, of course, relapse into the state of the Guinea coast, but its decadence will not prove that Liberia or Saint Domingo or any ordinary West Indian Island handed over to the blacks may not be more fortunate.

Hayti was unfortunate in its beginnings. When the French Assembly proclaimed negro emancipation the planters refused to submit, and succeeded in arming the mulattoes against the pure negroes. The result, of course, was a disastrous servile and civil war, in which the people were brutalised by familiarity with every kind of horror, the only man of really noble and fine character who emerges during the whole struggle being the negro Toussaint L'Ouverture. Then, when Hayti was enjoying comparative quiet under its most successful ruler, President Boyer, France sent a fleet in 1825 to insist on the payment of a large indemnity to the planters, and for thirteen years the country was kept unsettled by the prospect of war, and Boyer was ultimately ruined for having patched up the best accommodation he could, or, as his enemies said, sold the country to France. "This wretched debt to France," says Sir Spenser

St. John, "has been the cause of half the misfortunes of Hayti." After Boyer's exile there was an interval of trouble till 1847, when Soulouque made himself at first President and then Emperor (1847—1859). The reaction against Boyer had been a party composed of negroes, and Soulouque represented negro ascendancy with a great deal that was grotesque and ridiculous. He was savage to his enemies, and involved the country in a foolish war with Saint Domingo, but he treated foreigners generally and Englishmen in particular well. Of Geffrard, his successor, Sir S. St. John says that "of all the rulers of Hayti he was certainly the most enlightened and the most thoroughly devoted to his country." "In manner he is polished and gentle, almost feminine in his gentleness, with a most agreeable expression, a winning smile, and much fluency in conversation." He was also personally brave. His faults were that he was ridiculously vain and treated his Ministers like head clerks. "The blacks wanted a black, the mulattoes wanted anyone else so that there was a change." The result of this division of counsels in the more intelligent minority has, of course, been that the blacks have got into power again and the present President, General Salomon, fourteen of whose family were shot for conspiracies



in Geffrard's time, governs by the army and appears bent on driving the coloured population out of the country. So far nothing can be worse. All that can be hoped is that Salomon may be driven out, as Soulouque was, or may be replaced by a negro of the same mould as Toussaint l'Ouverture.

Of course, Presidents and Ministers are one and all corrupt. The English exports to Hayti are valued in England at more than double what they are entered for in the custom-house books of Hayti, the profits on smuggling in the balance going into the pockets of the leading members of Government. Soulouque abstracted four hundred thousand pounds for himself and his favourites from the coffee monopoly alone. Under Geffrard's rule, though it was much better, millions of dollars disappeared unaccountably, and when the Chamber of Deputies began to ask inconvenient questions it was summarily dissolved. The judges have two or three fixed principles, such as always to condemn political offenders, and generally to decide against any foreigner who will not bribe heavily. As a rule they are not even lawyers by profession, but are partisans of Government, rewarded with judge-ships; and the wife is often serving behind a counter while the husband is hearing causes on

the bench. Many of the bar will sell the client whom they are retained to defend; and the best among them will wander off from the subject into perfectly irrelevant digressions to air their eloquence or their learning. The police are brutal and incompetent. Ordinary soldiers do the work of constables, under the orders of civil commissaries; and their great idea is to belabour with clubs persons arrested. Spies, who report political conversations, are numerous, but there is no attempt at a detective branch of the service, and criminals go on with impunity till they offend a person of influence. On one occasion Sir Spenser St. John was robbed of eighteen dozen of claret by a servant. The thief sold four dozen to an intimate friend of his master's, and the police having recovered the other fourteen dozen, divided eleven dozen and five bottles among various high officials. The small remainder went back to the lawful owner, who found out what had become of the bulk by the remark of a Haytian friend, who breakfasting with him and recognising the brand of the wine, said, laughingly, as he took up a bottle, "Now I understand a remark made by the Minister of the Exterior when he said what capital wine the English Minister imported." The Army is as corrupt as the police. A general

only gets from a hundred and five to a hundred and forty pounds a year, but as Sir Spenser St. John gives an estimate in one place by which one-third of the army are generals, the economy even in this way would not be great unless we assume, as is probably the case, that only generals on active service draw pay. The mass of the soldiers do not attend drill and let the officers appropriate their pay. In the capital, mechanics and tradesmen often pay to be exempt from active service. President Salnave had an efficient regiment which he marched on one occasion into the principal street, where he gave them leave to plunder with a qualification—"My boys, plunder in an orderly manner."

The picture of production and municipal arrangements is not much brighter. Hayti exported the nominal value of ten million pounds, equivalent, it is said, to fifteen million pounds of our money, in 1789. She now exports to the average value of about two million pounds. The great decline has been in sugar. Under French rule eighty thousand tons were exported. Now, though the soil is admirably suited to the production, the people only grow enough cane for their own use, and in the shape of molasses whence they distil rum. The negroes retain a prejudice inherited from old times against plantation work, but the real reason, Sir S. St. John thinks, is that

the costly factories now needed in the business cannot be put up in a country where property is insecure. The account of the capital, Port-au-Prince, is deplorable. Almost all the grand buildings which made it a noble city under French rule have been destroyed by civil war or by fire. The only grand building that any native ruler has attempted was the citadel of Le Fervière, five thousand feet above the sea, built by King Christopher, every stone of which is said to have cost a human life. All is of solid masonry, and some of the walls are eighty feet high and sixteen feet thick ; but an earthquake laid it in ruins in a few minutes. The houses in Port-au-Prince are surrounded with the dust heaps and other filth of the inhabitants, and the work of scavenging is done by the great floods which come down in the rainy season. There was an aqueduct, but in 1877 the people in the suburbs were still breaking open the old stone work to obtain a source of supply near their dwellings ; and pigs, children, and washerwomen congregated round these spots and defiled the stream. The most damning fact against the Haytians, however, is the existence of what is known as the Vaudoux worship. This abominable superstition, derived, it is said, from a single barbarous tribe, the Mondongues, consists of weapon worship, and

the sacrifice and eating as food of human beings enters into the ritual. The whole black population appears now to be tainted with this practice, and as its votaries continue to profess Catholicism and perform their horrible rites in some of the great Church festivals, such as Easter, Christmas Eve and Twelfth Night, it is very difficult to detect them. The priests derive a great deal of their power from their knowledge of vegetable poisons. A case is mentioned of a man who having struck an enemy was threatened that he should be made powerless, and actually became paralytic in fifteen years. In this case a Vaudoux priest confessed to having used the poison, and for twenty pounds administered a remedy which completely restored the sufferer to health. Now, whether imagination was or was not the chief acting cause in this instance, it is evident that men whom the community suppose to be armed with such formidable power are likely to be revered and obeyed. In general, no ruler dares to punish the Vaudoux priest, even when a human sacrifice is clearly brought home to him. The way of procuring victims is either by stealing children, or by way-laying travellers, or by administering strong narcotics, under the influence of which the sufferer is buried alive, to be disinterred when night comes

and to be dismembered or drained of his blood. The heart, brain, lungs, and liver appear to be the parts specially prized, but there seems to be no doubt that many of the worshippers get an absolute craving for human flesh, and will kill their own children to procure it. In one instance where a priest said to a mother, "How could you eat the flesh of your own children?" she answered curtly, "And who had a better right? is it not I who made them?" It is said that the papalois or priests of the Vaudoux die in general covered with leprosy and incurable sores, though at an advanced age; but Sir S. St. John fears that this is only a pious superstition. Except during one year of Geffrard's Presidency, no real effort has been made to put down these horrors, and Soulouque and Salnave were themselves Vaudoux worshippers.

It will probably seem to those who look only at this side of the medal as if Hayti was the most God-forgotten spot on the face of the globe—an earthly Paradise possessed by devils and brutes. There are parts, however, of Sir S. St. John's narrative which leave a very different impression, though the author assuredly did not intend to convey it. For instance, it is no small fact in itself that a community of slaves and co-

loured freedmen should have been able to preserve a centralised Government and national unity, instead of splitting up into tribes like those of Africa. A people of little more than three-quarters of a million, if so many, which is able to raise more than a pound a head for purposes of Government, which has kept itself free, and which exports to the value of two millions a year, is very much above Ashantee or Abyssinia, though it may be below the worst governed state in Europe. The Haytians, again, have very much increased the production of cocoa in the French times, and when the American war broke out they became cotton-producers with very profitable results. Everything seems to show that if they had a strong Government and good roads, they would soon cover the whole country with plantations, though they probably would not work so hard for gain as their forefathers did under the lash. The first care of the enfranchised slaves was to buy little allotments of land from the Government. At present they are not a hard-working race, and they have not been made more industrious by the habit of civil war, but Sir S. St. John steadily assumes that they will work if it is worth their while to do so. Perhaps more than this is not to be expected. Let us bear in mind that the

English of the sixteenth century were declared by foreign observers to be as lazy as Spaniards.

Scarcely less important in their own way than the capacity to hold together and to labour are the aptitude for taking polish and for enlarging the mind. On these points Sir S. St. John's evidence is conclusive. "The politeness of the country negro," he says, "is very remarkable," and even the town negro does not leave much to be desired, both being infinitely superior to our colonial negroes. Of the mulattoes we read that "foreigners who casually meet Haytians are often only struck by their agreeable manners," and it seems that half the foreign residents in Port-au-Prince have married coloured wives. The excuse given for this was that the women are so superior to the men, but Sir S. St. John gives several instances of highly cultivated men, such as Auguste Eli, a Minister for Foreign Affairs, whose society was sought by the best foreigners, and who had the remarkable power of remembering almost all that he read and of digesting all he remembered. The misfortune is that men of this type are at present very much fewer than accomplished ladies, and the ambition of the fair Haytian is, accordingly, to marry a European. The secondary civilisation of cleanliness is not yet thoroughly



naturalised, but the negroes are very fond of bathing and the Haytians have adopted the French fashion of laying in great stores of personal and household linen. "The blacks are, if anything, more particular than the coloured in securing the most expensive underclothing." Mrs. Beecher Stowe used to paint the plantation negro as intensely devout. The Haytian seems to wear his religion rather loosely, partly because the native priests were for some time a scandal to society, and partly because the Church made itself unpopular by denouncing Freemasonry. Now, however, French priests have been imported, and the Church has become respectable, and may in time exercise a salutary influence. Education, of course, has been neglected, but there seems to be some thirty thousand pupils in State and private schools, so that twenty per cent. of the population is probably acquiring book learning. There are the beginnings of a literature. There have been two native histories of Hayti, each of which Sir S. St. John praises highly, and he gives some specimens of poetry in the Creole dialect, which are perhaps a little above the average in feeling. "In miscellaneous literature," we are told, "there are many publications of merit." Comparing Hayti in this respect with the Mauritius, which has not

produced a single native historian, the advantage appears to be altogether on the side of the self-governed community.

There remains, of course, the terrible charge of Vaudoux worship to be disposed of. No one will doubt that it will have to be extirpated like Thuggee in India. Meanwhile it ought in fairness to be remembered that it is derived from African tribes, who practise it openly in their own country; that the Haytians are thoroughly ashamed of it; and that cannibalism is only indulged in by a section of the serpent worshippers. Considering that even under French rule the Vaudoux worship could not be suppressed, it is scarcely wonderful if native rulers, obliged to defer to the prejudices of the black majority, have only succeeded in thrusting it a little into the background. That they have been over timorous in dealing with it seems certain, but it may be believed that a strong Government would stamp out the worst features of it in twenty years. Where that strong Government is to come from is the insoluble problem at present. A single man of genius may retrieve the fortunes of the country, but if such a ruler should not appear, the best thing that could happen for the Haytians would probably be that some great country, France or England, or the United

States, should annex them provisionally. That the race is wanting in political capacity seems proved. Meanwhile, that the great grandchildren of insurgent slaves should be fairly industrious and cleanly, well mannered, capable of improvement in religion, and of proficiency in literature, seems to indicate that the coloured race, at least, need not be despaired of. It may well be doubted if Guatemala, Venezuela, New Granada or Peru stands on a higher level at this moment than Hayti; yet no one will despair of these States who sees what Brazil, Chili and Mexico are achieving out of similar elements.

## XIX.—AN AGNOSTIC'S PROGRESS <sup>1</sup>

It is a bold experiment for any writer to challenge comparison with John Bunyan and with Nathaniel Hawthorne; and the audacity of the attempt is not diminished when the allegory addresses itself to a narrower circle of experiences. Bunyan's pilgrim travels from the sense of moral degradation in which all Christians are brought up to the sense of beatitude that thousands of Christians attain; and Hawthorne's excursionists start from popular religion and end in Tophet. In each case there is no doubt or confusion of purpose possible after the straight path has been reached. In the *Agnostic's Progress* the journey is from the City of Superstition to the Borderland of the Unknown, and it has been a necessity of the artist's conception that the pilgrim's end should be veiled with mystery. As we are not permitted to guess

<sup>1</sup> *An Agnostic's Progress*, from the Known to the Unknown. London: Williams and Norgate.

whether the Unknown has any possibilities of life and action and hope for the inquirer, so also we find his friends and companions treading parallel, or it may be divergent paths, with almost equal success. The typical Agnostic, Quæstor, succeeds, it is true, in extricating himself from the Kingdom of Superstition, from the Castle of Despair, and other familiar dangers, but so also does Gracious, who is overpowered by the sophistries of Giant Pope, so do Sanitis, the physical science reformer, and Negatio, the fearless denier. What the author, in fact, seems to claim is no more than that a reverent Agnosticism, declining to recognise any form of theological creed, but not associating itself with any form of speculative unbelief, and occupying itself with labours of love, is as wholesome morally as any type of faith, and more respectable intellectually. That is a very temperate conclusion. Probably most orthodox people will be inclined to admit that such a man as Quæstor is represented to be—thoroughly reverent, and filled with the spirit of martyrdom—is not far from the kingdom of God, whatever his speculative propensities may be. Many will qualify this admission by adding that Quæstor, as he is painted, is no proper example of what humanity without God would be, and that the real Agnostic is repre-

sented by Audax, who sinks into sheer materialism, or by Negatio, who is blank Atheism. In a word the *Agnostic's Progress* seems to be a defence of one particular Agnostic rather than of Agnosticism; and Quæstor would be regarded by unbelievers in general as a sheep in wolf's clothing.

When this reservation has been made, it will be found that the *Agnostic's Progress* is a really powerful book and worked out with considerable skill. The new pilgrim is first led out of the City of Superstition by Experience; he passes through the wicket gate of Doubt; he finds in the Interpreter's House a sanctuary of all knowledge, in which students are led to very different conclusions; and in the House Beautiful he gets his senses quickened with a vision of the regenerating influences of beauty. By a very intelligent tribute to modern changes of thought, Pope and Pagan, who in Bunyan's time were powerless to disturb Christians, Pagan being in fact dead, and Pope paralysed, are represented as vigorous with a new vitality. Pagan, his head crowned with flowers, and surrounded by "many of rare gifts in poetry, in song, and in music, and in all the fine arts," invites the pilgrims who pass by to join "the realm of Welcome, where everyone does as he or she pleases." Pope, on the other hand, has put

away the triple crown and crosier sceptre, and wears the guise of a venerable old man, with the air and demeanour of a meek martyr. It is here that Quæstor and his friend Gracious—who will not be his wife because she distrusts his doubting temperament—are at last irrevocably severed. Quæstor, though he has recoiled from Pagan's teaching after he has understood his drift, has not feared to examine it. Gracious has passed over at once into the company of Pope's followers. Nevertheless, Gracious continues her friendly intercourse with Quæstor, and in spite of her spiritual director reads all that he writes when he becomes a journalist in Vanity Fair. Quæstor goes through a rough novitiate in that famous city. "Next to money, the most potent weapon in Vanity Fair was ridicule, and the highest instincts of the soul, the noblest ambitions of the intellect and the purest affections of the heart, were all brought to this terrible test by people who could not comprehend or imagine anything better than themselves and their own selfish and petty motives. To every unsympathising nature, the most elevated, the most tender, and the most tragic of human circumstances and emotions have their absurd side.... One of the favourite spectacles and amusements of Vanity Fair, not only of the

populace, but of those who stood high in estimation and in office, was to put such enthusiasts as had entered through the Gate of Reform into the pillory, and to make them endure all the jeers and ribaldry that could be levelled at them by the populace... Quæstor's first opponents, the compact hosts of Philistia, had not much idea of fun in general, but they had one great source of amusement, which was the contrast between the lofty aspirations in the pillory, where any ignorant ragamuffin or drunken rough might pelt him to his heart's content." There can be little question that wit in all its forms except satire flourishes best where there is an absence of moral earnestness, and is therefore essentially Conservative, especially when it caters for the lowest taste, as caricature and buffoonery. In Bunyan's *Vanity Fair*, written at a time when it seemed as if one earth could not hold those who differed in faith, the passage from ridicule to bloodshed was easy and swift. In the *Vanity Fair* known to Quæstor, the prophet who could outlive the pillory gradually conquered toleration, and indeed possibly achieved victory for his own views, but not so completely as to secure a hearing for the next preacher of truth. *An Agnostic's Progress* contains incidentally a very subtle sketch of Carlyle as a white-haired prophet



who denounced all existing systems, but was equally indignant against all proposed reforms; and was perhaps less offended by Quæstor than any of his fellows, because "his aims were less definite than theirs, and his zeal was not excessive in any direction." The first part of this criticism has often been made. The second part seems singularly penetrative, and suggests the idea that Carlyle was, in fact, so incapable of conceiving in what way change should be effected, and so supremely capable of seeing in what directions failure was inevitable, that he fell back in absolute despair upon the society of those whose thoughts were too vague to be readily tested by any Nemesis in the shape of an event.

As the description of Vanity Fair is perhaps the part in which the author of *An Agnostic's Progress* most visibly exceeds Bunyan's execution—though not Bunyan's conception—so the episode of Simulation is perhaps on the whole the weakest, as it challenges comparison with some of Bunyan's most powerful writing—the argument with By-ends. It is undoubtedly a fault of art that Quæstor is made too dreamy and eclectic, too tolerant of differences of veracity, and that it is difficult to resist the impression that he might have absorbed a good deal that was unhealthy into his system

if he had lived long under any single influence. Accordingly, when the searching wind catches him, and bears him away to the wall beyond which is death, we feel that his victorious life has been a fortunate accident, and half expect him to yield when Gracious urges him to declare that he has real knowledge, through faith, of the Infinite and the Eternal. Indeed, though he dies an Agnostic, Gracious declares that she sees him received by a Glorious Being into what she at least assumes to be the Christian's heaven.

There can be no question that modern doubt occupies a very different position from the scepticism of a few centuries ago. In times when speculation proceeded by *a priori* guesses as to the order of the universe, the infidel might be and very often was a man who wanted the scientific imagination. The doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation as expounded by an Augustine or an Anselm, had a completeness and a symmetry about them which the attack wanted; and it is probable that if Arianism had triumphed, the relapse into Fetish worship which actually took place during the Middle Ages, would have been very much more universal and complete than it is. Modern scepticism does not concern itself with showing theories to be improbable, but with

demonstrating facts to be false; and the modern Freethinker in his best type is not the man who wants but the man who possesses the scientific imagination. The misfortune is that the personality of God seems now and again to be crowded out in the contemplation of His works and laws, and the quarrel between persons of a religious temperament and the scientific world reduces itself very much to this: that the Christian hesitates to accept an order of the world in which God is not perpetually approached by prayer and revealed by miracles, while the scientific man regards a prayer for rain as revolt against the Divine will, and capricious changes of God's order as impossible. To those who remember that the religious instinct seems part of human nature itself, and that the supposed antagonism of religion and science has perpetually been disproved by scientific men who are religious like Faraday, or religious men who accept science like Thirlwall, it will seem eminently conceivable that our present difficulties will appear very small indeed a hundred years hence. Meanwhile, what is the Agnostic's position towards them? His choice of a name shows that he does not absolutely reject the theory of a personal God, but simply declares himself to know nothing in the matter. His hesitancy is based upon his

acceptance of modern science, and his incapacity to transcend the limitations of what science has revealed. While, however, he shrinks from worship or faith, he accepts the moral teaching of Christianity, at least if he be like-minded with Quæstor, practises purity and the restraint of passion, devotes his life to doing good, and is generally a disciple without a master. That men of this type exhibit a very interesting phase of thought, and are really religious whether they think it or not, may be conceded. That they are more than a fleeting compromise between reason and faith must be doubted. If a reverent ignorance is to be the last word of thought about religion, not only will Christ have died in vain, but science will have toiled to little real purpose.

The real future for Agnosticism would seem to be rather as a cloak for spiritual incapacity than as a timid form of faith. It seems certain that there are men who are devoid of the religious instinct, or who cannot think themselves into any orthodox position, just as there are men who have no ear for music, no eye for beauty of form and colouring, or it may be no capacity for mathematical analysis. Such men fall easily into their places in society when they confess frankly in what senses they are deficient, and leave the verdict in matters

of which they know nothing to experts. Religious Agnosticism, faith in something good, which the worshipper cannot define or express, and is afraid to name, is altogether too vague and cloud-like to be more than a mood in persons or in a generation. There was a time when society could build altars to "an unknown God," but it was the time when men were certain of divinity, and only doubtful whether all its manifestations had been properly catalogued. At present, if religion is to hold its own, it must decide definitely how much it will discard and how much it is prepared to retain. It is certain that the old creeds have been outgrown. It is equally certain that a large part of the world has found nothing better to believe in than the teaching of the Gospels in their simplicity; and the men who wish to live up to it while they profess to know nothing about it, are nothing more than Christians without Christ.

1884

## XX.—HIGH LIFE IN FRANCE<sup>1</sup>

THE late Mr. Grenville-Murray was a very remarkable specimen of the successful literary man. Born to an unfortunate position on the outskirts of the highest society as the natural son of a Duke, he attracted the attention of Lord Palmerston by the singular ability of his sketches of Continental life, and was nominated to the Embassy at Constantinople. There he quarrelled with his redoubtable chief, "the great Elchee", Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, and made himself so intolerable by his criticisms in the press that he was for a time literally banished, under pretence of a diplomatic mission, to an obscure Greek island. Mr. Grenville-Murray was, however, too strong to be shelved, and he presently obtained a lucrative and honor-

<sup>1</sup>*High Life in France Under the Republic*, by E. C. Grenville-Murray. London: Vizetelly and Co. (1888) Author of "Side Lights on English Society," &c.

able post as consul at Odessa. Before long he embroiled himself in a quarrel with the English merchants of the place on a question of fees, and after much delay Lord Derby, who was then Foreign Secretary, gave his decision in favour of the merchants. Mr. Grenville-Murray threw up his appointment in disgust, and came to London. There he took to satirising some of the leaders of English Society in a fashion that is now fairly common, but that was not understood or tolerated twenty years ago. Lord Carrington, whose father was attacked, horsewhipped Mr. Murray at the door of the Conservative Club, and the Conservative Club expelled Mr. Murray. From that day he settled in Paris, but his contributions to the *Pall Mall Gazette* and the *Cornhill Magazine*, as well as some clever novels, kept him before the eyes of the reading public, and were certainly very noticeable. The best are beyond praise in their peculiar way, and the flimsiest and least substantial are abundantly readable. Mr. Grenville-Murray was a man who knew the Continent as a whole as few Englishmen know it, who lived in what is known as good society, and had an observant eye for its foibles and characteristics. His style, though a little infected in his later works with French idioms, is extremely easy and light, and

he was a master in the difficult art of flavouring all he wrote with sub-acid epigrammatic touches, while he avoided the brutal directness of the epigram, and that sense of painful iteration which its extravagant use produces.

Of the various countries Mr. Grenville-Murray described at different times, he succeeded best with France. His sketches of Germany, Greece, and Turkey, amusing and life-like as they were, were derived from a much less thorough knowledge of the countries and the people than that which later in life he acquired of France. His sketches of Russian society are thoroughly superficial and grossly unfair, giving one the impression that in this instance Mr. Murray was deliberately pandering to the prejudices of English Jingoism. Neither was Mr. Murray able to write judicially or sympathetically about England. He had come to hate the society that he had offended so wantonly, and that had punished his offences so bitterly, and his *Side Lights on English Society*—the last book he issued during his lifetime—are a series of vindictive libels on persons whom the author disliked. On the other hand, France was Mr. Murray's adopted home. He caught the tone of its society; made a thorough study of its institutions in their practical working, and seems to show at



every turn that he thoroughly enjoys the society he is laughing at. English satire is regarded with considerable dislike and dread in France, on account of its rough tone. We think a fair French critic would admit that Mr. Murray was not more caustic than Reybaud, or Charles de Bernard, or About, and that his criticisms, in every instance, were without gall. In a certain sense Mr. Murray was superficial. He did not know the French peasant or the trading class, except as all the world knows them, from Balzac or from Daudet. Even in the upper classes Mr. Murray's knowledge was superficial and limited in this sense, that he was evidently a man who was not at home with good women or with men of high honour. He has sketched a heroine now and again very charmingly, but she is not specially French, and she is not described with any of that subtle analysis which makes Mr. Murray's portraitures of the woman of fashion or the speculator, the literary man or the police spy, so irresistible. Perhaps this is not a very grave demerit in an amusing author. It must be confessed that even the description of virtue is apt to keep the moral sense at a state of high pressure, which it is the duty and the charm of light literature to avoid.

What one wants from a book with the title of *High Life Under the Republic* is to learn in what respect the fashionable society of Paris differs under the Republic from what it was under Louis Philippe and Louis Napoleon. Under both these sovereigns the best society was not to be met at court. Louis Philippe was hated with an intensity that it seems difficult to realise now—as the son of Philippe Egalité, as the usurper who had expelled Charles X, as the King who wanted the manners and mind of a gentleman. At the same time certain great families like the De Broglies had the courage to recognise Louis Philippe as a constitutional king, and a great many brilliant statesmen and literary men—Casimir Périer, Guizot, and Thiers—supported him. One of the main ideas of his administration, which failed because it was so feebly carried out, was to ally the court with the commercial classes. Louis Napoleon was much less hated than Louis Philippe, but he was incomparably more despised. The men of letters who would accept a pension or an order from him might be counted upon the fingers; and the men of good family were scarcely more numerous. Latterly the scandals that grew up about the court were so numerous that it became disreputable to be in any way connected with it. Since

he disappeared society has been left to itself. The old nobility is no longer overshadowed by a pretentious court; adventurers, speculators and depraved women have ceased to be the disposers of power and the arbiters of fashion, and the Church is out of favour with the powers that be. As for the army, it is broken up into cliques, which reflect the disorganisation of the country. One result of these changes seems to be that the country looks less than it did to the Administration for guidance. One cannot imagine Mr. Murray having written a long book about French Society under the Empire, and omitting all mention of the Emperor and his court. President Grévy, however, is scarcely mentioned in these papers. Ministers and prefects are only noticed to show how insignificant and how corrupt they are. In the next place, let it be said to the credit of the Republic that immorality—having no Emperor to sustain it—is no longer in fashion. Civilised men and women are, of course, pretty much the same in all countries; but it makes an appreciable difference whether the Head of the State patronises a singer of loose songs and chooses pictures with licentious subjects for his collection, or whether he practises austerity and domestic virtue.

It is evident that in Mr. Grenville-Murray's estimation Frenchwomen are the real rulers of France.<sup>1</sup> There is nothing new in this. Why it should be that the nation which prided itself on the Salic law should be so unconditionally subject to feminine rule would take long to explain, but every student of French history knows that the women of France have governed its Kings and animated its revolutions. The first Napoleon kept himself independent of the sex, and was brutally hostile to it; but then the first Napoleon was not a Frenchman. What makes the mystery more insoluble is that Frenchwomen seem to be trained from their tenderest years to a life of absolute submission. The young girl is brought up in a convent under the most caressing and most vigilant of despotisms. She is perhaps summoned from her lessons—as Mr. Murray describes in one of his sketches—to be introduced to the gentleman whom she is to marry in about two months. Even if she is not disposed of so rapidly, and goes home for three or four years, she will not be expected to talk to the partners with whom she dances at balls, or to speak to strangers of the other sex in drawing-rooms, or to go about visiting in country houses.

[<sup>1</sup> See *French Traits, an Essay in Comparative Criticism*, by W. C. Brownell, New York, Scribners Sons, 1889: Especially Chap. vi. Ed.]

According to the French ideal she is to be innocent and ignorant as a child till the day she becomes a wife. Thereafter her husband by all theory is to mould her as he chooses. Thereafter it is she by all fact who moulds her husband and determines his fortunes. She comes to him without education, except in the most superficial accomplishments, and without knowledge of the world; but she carries about her somehow the secret of empire. Mr. Murray's longest sketch in the volume before us is the history of the fortunes of a journalist, M. Tartine, who being debarred from literature for a time in consequence of an unlucky partnership, determines to venture into matrimony. He puts himself in the hands of his family notary, and is introduced to a charming girl with a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, whose mother has been an opera dancer, and is now anxious to rehabilitate herself by marrying her daughter respectably. M. Tartine has married with the very natural idea of founding a newspaper, which shall become the admiration and delight of Paris, and which shall give him fortune and power. But his mother-in-law, Mdme. de Frailski, is better advised. She points out to him that there will always be time enough to found a newspaper, and that it will be infinitely better for him to enter Govern-

ment service as a prefect. The instincts of the old Bohemian revolt. He has never seen a high dignitary ply his avocations in an embroidered swallow-tail without feeling stricken with mirth; and it takes a good deal of practical argument from Mdme. de Frailski to convince him that as he is now prosperous he is bound to place himself on the side of authority. Even when he has consented to become a candidate, M. Tartine's negotiations for office would miscarry if they were left to himself. The Minister does not like journalists who have been in opposition, and M. Tartine does not exactly conciliate confidence by stating that if Government were to commission him to proclaim that cauliflowers grew with their heads under ground he would do it cheerfully. A Minister likes that temper of obedience in an official, and may generally, as we all know, count on it, but he does not like it to be announced beforehand with a cynical outspokenness. Cynicism is not in keeping either with the deference of good breeding or with the faith that accompanies a sound morality and belief in the principles of order. However, Mdme. de Frailski and her charming daughter pay secret visits not in vain to the Minister, who is wise enough to know that a man cannot go very wrong if his wife and

mother-in-law are right-minded. M. Tartine is appointed prefect of Singebourg. He is a little ashamed of his promotion when it first comes to him; and feels more galled by the collar than pleased by the gilt. Moreover, for some time he is stupid enough not to understand that women are better fitted than men to succeed in a very mixed society, where all depends upon finding out where the elements of strength are, and allying yourself with them.

Society in Singebourg is happy enough not to contain more than five principal divisions. There are the Church party, with the Bishop at its head; the Orleanists, who are favoured by the General; the party of Government, presided over by the Chief Judge; the ordinary Republicans, whose spokesman is the Mayor, and the Extreme Left, represented by a Darwinian journalist. It will be seen that two important sections are not prominent in Singebourg. The Legitimists we must suppose are buried in their country seats, or are dying out; and the Napoleonists are probably demoralised by the double split in their party. M. Tartine ought to find the path before him strewn with roses, but M. Tartine cannot discover the secret of government. He is badgered by the Bishop who wants the nuns to teach in the municipal

schools, and by the General who complains that his officers have been kicked out of the public theatre for disturbing a performance. The Liberals denounce him as too gentle; and, in fact, his chief clerk cannot persuade him to adopt the favourite expedient of prefects out of favour, and imprison an anarchist. M. Tartine has a sneaking liking for anarchists. Driven furious by the reprimands he receives from his official superior M. Tartine is on the point of ruining himself and compromising the Government by filling the official gazette with a flaming invective against the Bishop and the General, penned in his very best style, when the horrified chief clerk calls Mdme. de Frailski in. We are only allowed to peep behind the veil and see how the unruly man was reduced to submission by his better angels. "Of course, his young wife had shed tears on learning that he wished to behave like an infidel, and Mdme. de Frailski had remarked that quarrelling with a General was but the first step to surrendering Nancy and all that remained of Lorraine to the German Empire." Luckily, Mdme. de Frailski is not contented with averting a scandal, but instructs M. Tartine in the method of governing paternally; that is, of exerting a silent but perceptible pressure upon all his surroundings. The Bishop is gently



admonished to submit his next pastoral to Mdme. de Fraïlski's orthodox censorship, as the Government are so anxious "to live on good terms with the Church." The General gets a hint wrapped up in a compliment like a pill in a bonbon, that he may be recommended for service in Africa if he continues to show himself restless at being cooped up in a small town. The Mayor is reduced to pliancy by a promise of the ribbon of the Legion of Honour; a discontented chandler is appeased with a contract for candles; the Royalist Club is shut up; and the radical journalist only escapes Mdme. de Fraïlski's lash because, before she assumed supreme power, she had already procured his dismissal from his editorship. Under this *régime* the people of Singebourg "ran in harness, felt the curb, and the whip was not spared;" but Frenchmen love the whip, and the Singebourgers said to one another: "Monsieur Tartine is a rough prefect. . . . He is dreaded and even liked. . . . From all which it is possible to derive a new moral: Let us love, honour and obey our mothers-in-law." Provided, of course, they be Frenchwomen.

The ablest literary man in the world can only give out what is in him, and it would not be fair to complain of Mr. Grenville-Murray because

the women he has met with and understood and sketched are all worldly, and intriguing and finessing like *Mdme. de Frailski*, though they are generally free from the dubious social antecedents which kept back that clever little woman for a time. Very charming and amusing are the portraits he gives us of *Madame de Rosethé*, the great Legitimist lady, and of her fashionable friends, *Mesdames de Réséda* and *de Mignonette*; of the actresses whom these ladies visit, of *Madame de Susurre*, who entangles a judge into giving a false judgment; of *Madame de Sabretache*, who conspires for the empire; and of *Madame de Fine-Mouche*, who is a police spy. Happily for France, all these ladies live in a very small world, and are counterpoised by the wholesome influences of a great many women who are the strength of every good movement and every noble cause. Mr. Murray has not attempted to explain the secret of feminine ascendancy in France, but appears to put it down to superior tact. No doubt Frenchwomen have that talent in perfection; but women all the world over have it more than men. May not part of the reason be that a despotism—and France, with rare exceptions, has been governed despotically for centuries—does more to demoralise men than women? Men find all the avenues of

success closed against them unless they will deny their convictions, and cannot even accept professional failure and speak out. For all but the sacred few who have the courage of their opinions, a life of subserviency or the most frivolous dissipation are the only careers possible. Women, as a rule, have greater liberty of speech, and do not suffer from a professional career being closed to them. Those among them who are sincerely religious, as it is still possible for many French women to be, are sustained by the inspiration of faith; and self-sacrifice and devotion to a cause perhaps come most naturally to the more impulsive and ardent sex when it is a question of some great national uprising against a foreign enemy. May it not be that it is the higher moral tone as well as the more subtle tact that make up a Frenchwoman's power?

Mr. Murray's sketches of men do not include any from the Quartier Latin, if indeed there be a Quartier Latin still; but he seems to have mixed a good deal with military men, and throws a great deal of curious light on the constitution of the army. The higher nobility now enter the army as officers, and their money and the influence they command make them very unpopular with their comrades in the mess. Even in the great

military school of St. Cyr the cadets are "divided into two camps, who hate each other with all their souls." The prospect would seem a melancholy one for France, but perhaps the change from the days of Napoleon III, when scarcely any gentleman would enter the army, though a great many joined the navy, is not for the worse. Nothing was more deplorable than to notice twenty years ago how the young men of historical name and unblemished family traditions were condemned to pass their lives in an ignoble obscurity, because they could not take service under "the man of the 2nd of December." It is the isolation of those days which is partly to blame for the bitterness of caste feeling, and one may hope that if a day of trial ever comes again for the French armies, the titled and untitled officers will become real brothers in arms in the presence of the foe.



# I N D E X

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